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ABSTRACT

Each page of this handbook contains ideas for suggested classroom activities and approaches to a specific aspect of life in English-speaking countries, especially Canada. Many of the subjects covered emphasize the development of skills in English as a second language or the mastery of specific points of grammar. Other units aim at imparting cultural understanding; still others center around those aspects of day-to-day living that must be mastered for survival. The units vary in level of difficulty. The handbook concludes with a supplemental supply of lesson plans, each of which surrounds a specific film that would be used in the ESL classroom. (JB)

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUES

VOLUMES 1 AND 2

Edited by Bev Ruhl

Alberta Vocational Centre, Edmonton

FL 012311

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUES

VOLUME ONE

Edited By Bev Ruhl

ALBERTA VOCATIONAL CENTRE, EDMONTON, CANADA, 1978.

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INTRODUCTION

History Behind the TT's

Most of these TT's were written to make our ESL classes more interesting and challenging for the students as well as more interesting to teach. We weren't satisfied with techniques we found in ESL texts so we started to develop our own ideas. Initially we passed them around informally. Later however, we began to write them down so that they reached everybody, including new staff, and so we wouldn't forget them. After three years of collecting TT's, we decided to organize them so that they would be easy to refer to. We are now publishing them in hopes that other ESL teachers will find them useful. We hope that this example of what sharing ideas can generate will inspire you to share your ideas with other teachers.

Suggestions on How to Use the TT's

All of the TT's have been used in our ESL classes. They can be used as is or modified to suit your individual teaching style and to meet the needs of your students. Perhaps new ideas will be generated by reading them. There are a variety of activities suggested in the TT's, both structured and unstructured, in and outside the classroom setting. They include practice of grammar structures, vocabulary enrichment, conversation, composition, listening comprehension and Canadian customs. In addition, many of the TT's call for the use of material and aids ranging from pictures and realia to transparencies and tape recorders. However, don't be discouraged if you do not have access to these extras. Think of it as a challenge to find alternatives.

This publication is designed so that you can file the TT's separately, reorganize them, or leave them all together. In addition, as the TT's are the result of sharing, we encourage instructors to duplicate individual TT's and pass them on to others who might benefit from them.

Definition of Levels

Many of the TT's can be used at different levels. The suggested level of the TT's reflects our levels at Alberta Vocational Centre. You can judge for yourself which TT's are appropriate for your particular students.

Guide to the Indices

There are three indices to the TT's. One is grammatical, another thematic and one is based on general techniques. A TT may appear in only one or in all three.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.1

CLASS LEVEL: Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Mukur Christianson

SUBJECT: important expressions

Write the following expressions on the blackboard:

a) Pardon me?
b) Sorry, I didn't hear you.
c) Please speak slowly.
d) I'm sorry, my English isn't very good.
e) Excuse me.
f) Certainly.
g) That's all right.
h) Sorry, I don't understand.

Next, go through various situations and point out which responses would be required.

Examples:

1. Whisper something from across the room to a student such as:
   "What time is it?"
   Response: "a" or "b"

2. Hand a written instruction to one student as follows:
   Please say "good morning" to _____ in your language.
   Response: "h"

3. Bump into a student and say, "Oh, excuse me."
   Response: "g"

4. Get a group up to the front of the room to pretend they're standing on a bus, holding the rail above. One student wants to get off.
   Response: "e", followed by "f"

5. Say something very quickly like "Where did you hang up your coat?"
   Response: "c"

6. Tell a student to write 10 perfect English sentences on the blackboard.
   Response: "d"

Spend a few minutes in subsequent classes using similar situations until their responses are automatic.

Some important questions to teach to a basic class include:

What does _____ mean?
How do you say this word?
How do you spell _____?

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.2

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Jeremy Rossiter

SUBJECT: consumer complaints/letter writing

Give the students a sample of a complaint letter. Divide the class into pairs. They must write letters to each other, one as the consumer with a complaint to make, the other as the manager of the company. Write several suggestions for them to write about on the blackboard.

Examples:

- -You paid a subscription to a magazine but it never came.
- -Your rent has gone up by 40%, and you don't approve.
- -You bought a new colour T.V. but you can't get a colour picture on it.
- -You bought a very expensive pedigree dog which (you were assured) had been spayed, but it's going to have puppies.
- -You bought some fertilizer for your lawn, but it killed all the grass.
- -You bought a new swimming suit, but when you dived into the pool for the first time the dye came out of it and turned the water red.

After they have composed their letters, get the class to read them out to the rest of the students.

Additional Activity:

Ask the students if they have any real complaints they could write a letter about. You could encourage them to actually write one. You could even compose it as a class activity if it's legitimate and not too personal. When the student gets a reply, he might share it with the class.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.3

CLASS LEVEL: any CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: interviews

Prepare a handout of possible interview questions. The questions you include can vary depending on the level of your class. With a higher level you might include the following:

What's your name?
Where are you from?
What's your nationality?
What languages do you speak?
What's your occupation?
Are you working now?
What did you do in your country?
Are you married?
Do you have any children? How old are they?
What does your husband/wife do?
Do you have any brothers and sisters?
How long have you lived in Canada?
Are you a Canadian citizen? (landed immigrant)
What do you like to do in your spare time?
Do you have any hobbies?

Explain that there are some personal questions that many Canadians don't like to be asked such as:

How old are you?
How much do you weigh?
Are you married?
How much money do you make?
What's your religion?

Also point out to the students how to refuse to answer politely:

Examples:

Tell an obvious lie. (I'm 29.)
Say: "I'd rather not say."
"That's rather personal."
"That's sort of personal."
"It's a secret."

(Mention as an example of a rude reply: "That's none of your business.")

Have the students practice by interviewing you and each other. After they have interviewed each other, have them relate 2 or 3 interesting facts about the person they interviewed. Having students interview each other at the beginning of a course in an excellent way for students to get to know each other and for the teacher to get to know them.

(over)

Follow-up:

With a high class try to line up people in your building, such as other teachers, the school nurse, principal, caretaking staff, secretaries, etc., that the students could interview. For a class of 20 students you would need about 8 to 10 people. Divide the students into groups of 2 or 3 and give them the name of a person to interview and a little bit of information about them. They must then arrange an interview with that person. They should prepare a few questions in advance but be prepared to ask different questions depending on how the interview goes. The students should know that the person will probably ask them questions as well. When all the groups have completed their interviews, have them report back to the class. They might find out what education the person has had, what his duties are, how long he has lived here, what his hobbies are, etc.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 4

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Jeremy Rossiter

SUBJECT: debates

Find some photos or maps of city centre developments. Divide the class into two groups, one representing the town planners, the other the government. The groups separate for discussion, the planners talking about how they would improve the downtown area of the city, the government about what they are doing to improve the same area. After discussion the groups confront each other in a debate. The government must defend its policies while the planners press for change. Features of city development which can be discussed include:

-public transportation (Is it efficient and economical?)
-private transportation (Should it be allowed in the downtown areas?)
-parks and trees (Are there enough?)
-entertainment (What are the facilities like?)
-social activities (Can you go out for drink or a coffee in decent surroundings?)
-shopping facilities (Are they pleasant?)

Go over debate procedure and decide on time limits for the two sides; also teach important expressions that they might use in presenting their case.

-We strongly believe that ...
-It is obvious that ...
-I'm convinced ...
-To sum up ...
-To illustrate my point ...
-Take for example ...
-etc.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.5

CLASS LEVEL: Basic CONTRIBUTOR: Joan Neehall

SUBJECT: Canada's flag and crest/Would you like ...?

On the first day bring a Canadian flag and crest to class. Have the students decribe it and tell them its significance if they don't know. Explain the motto on the crest. Ask the students to try to find items that have the crest or flag on it and bring it to class the next day.

On the second day have the students show what they have brought and you produce a packet of Dare's Maple Leaf Cream Cookies. Give the students the following pattern:

A: Would you like to have a cookie?
B: Yes, I would. (Yes, please.) Thank you.
A: You're welcome.

Now offer a cookie to the student nearest to you, and ask him to offer one to another student. Let them repeat the procedure among themselves until everyone has had a turn. If a student doesn't want one, you could introduce new expressions like: a) No, thank you. I'm watching my weight. b) I'm on a diet. c) I don't like cookies. d) I'm not really hungry.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 6

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic CONTRIBUTOR: Sheila Reid

SUBJECT: telephone directories

The following activity can be done as a review of important telephone numbers. Give each student a telephone directory or copy of the appropriate pages from the directory. Tell the studerts that you are going to make a statement like "Your baby has just swallowed a bottle of aspirins." They must look for the appropriate number to call. The first student to call out the number must hold a conversation with the teacher regarding the emergency. The teacher should speak quickly and ask appropriate questions like "What's your name? Spell it, please."

Examples:

There is a fire in your basement.
Your husband had a heart attack.
Your kitchen sink is running over.
You need the number of a friend who has just moved.
You have lost your cat.
You have been in a car accident.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 7

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Marian Rossiter

SUBJECT: game vocabulary and expressions

Choose some games that are appropriate for your students i.e. scrabble, funny bones, card games, etc. Teach the students the appropriate vocabulary and expressions for the games. Then the students break into small groups to play the games. They have to converse about the game and during the game.

Examples:

It's your turn.
You win/lose.
What's my score?
I need more letters.
That's cheating.
Try again.
Well done.
Too bad.
Bad luck.
You missed your turn.
You get another turn.
You lose your turn.
Throw again.
You forgot to move.
You can't do that.
That's not a word, is it?
etc.

In preparation for teaching this vocabulary get together with friends and actually play the games. Record what is said and use these expressions to teach to the class.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.8

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: marriage customs

The following are possible discussion topics to be included in a special unit on marriage customs:

1. what you have to do to get married in Alberta (or another province)
   -get a blood test
   -get a marriage licence
   -pay for the licence
   -be a certain age

2. what you don't you have to do
   -have a traditional church wedding
   -the woman doesn't have to change her name

3. the differences between a traditional church wedding and a civil ceremony
   -which is more common?
   -what is typical of each ceremony?
   -The teacher could show the students wedding photos of different weddings, their own and their friends'.

4. common-law relationships, living together before marriage, the high divorce rate in Canada

5. wedding customs in other countries
   encourage them to bring photos of their weddings.

Activities:

Have the students cut out wedding announcements from the local paper and any write-ups about weddings. Small town papers often have articles describing what the bride and groom wore, etc. Otherwise, write up a story about two people who got married. Include some of the relevant vocabulary.

Give the students a hand-out of wedding vocabulary and if possible a summary of the necessary steps to get married in Canada

(over)

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Vocabulary:

proposal
engagement
engagement ring
fiance, fiancee
announcement
invitation
marriage licence
blood test
get married
get engaged
shower
stag
bride
groom
civil ceremony
church wedding
best man
maid-of-honour
bridesmaid
flower girl
ring bearer
Justice of the Peace
minister, rabbi, etc.
wedding dress, veil
tuxedo
bouquet
garter
wedding band (ring)
wedding cake
reception
master of ceremonies
honeymoon

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 9

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Michael Aldcroft

SUBJECT: weather

Make two sets of cards, one with the names of countries, cities, or provinces, and the other with weather phenomena. Each student selects a country card and a weather card and makes up a weather report. They must decide if "it" or "there" is required.

Examples:

raining - Toronto
Student: It is raining in Toronto.

fog - London
Student: There is fog in London.

20^{0} below zero - Bombay
Student: It is 20^{0} below zero in Bombay.

a blizzard - Beirut
Student: There is a blizzard in Beirut.

Obviously, some of the weather reports will be ridiculous. Check for comprehension by asking the students if the report is possible or not.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.10

CLASS LEVEL: Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Julia Melynk
Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: family relationships

First introduce basic family vocabulary like mother, father, children, brother. Use pictures or transparencies of families for the students to refer to. Draw a simple family tree on the board and give the people names. Then teach them the rest of the vocabulary like aunt, uncle, mother-in-law, son-in-law, cousin. Give the students a handout like the example on the back. When the students are familiar with the names of family members, make up cards with a name on one side and a relationship on the other side. Have enough family members so that every student receives a card.

Maria	daughter	Jose	son	Susan	mother	John	father

(front) (back)

Choose the son and daughter to be the points of reference. Each student receives a card and they stand as if they were having a family portrait taken. Each student has to state their name and relationship to the son and daughter. Have the son and daughter stand up first. The daughter says: "I'm Jose's sister." The son says: "I'm Maria's brother." Add family members gradually. The mother says: "I'm Jose's mother." etc. Continue this until all the members are standing and have stated their relationship. Finally, have them tell their relationship to other family members.

This is often a humorous activity because of the funny combinations that result such as a son who is older than the father. Also, this is an ideal time to take a class photo.

Additional Activities:

Bring photos of your family to class. Point out your family members. Suggest that students bring photos of their families. However, make this optional because some students may be sensitive about their families due to a recent death or family separation for example.

As a written activity have the students draw their family trees. Put yours on the blackboard as an example.

For discussion, talk about the "family" in Canada. Topics could include the fact that the extended family members do not usually live with the nuclear group, members of a family often don't see each other very often, etc. Compare "the family" in other countries.

(over)

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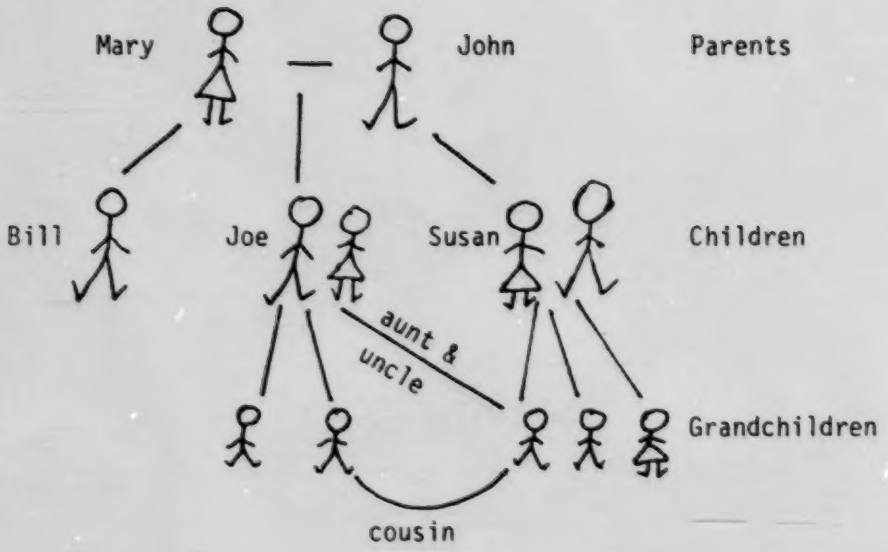
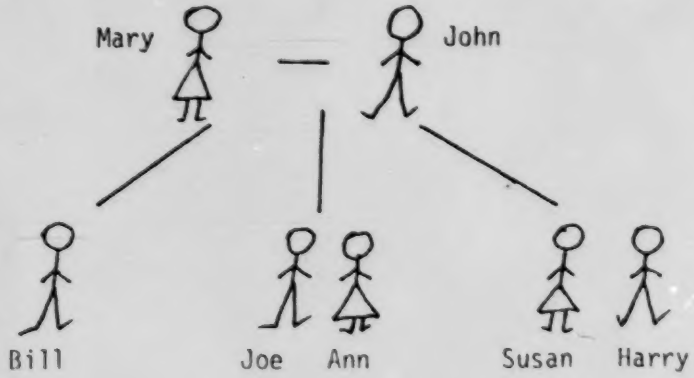
THE FAMILY

Mary is John's wife.
John is Mary's husband.
They are the parents of Bill, Joe and Susan.
Mary is the mother; John is the father.
Bill and Joe are Susan's brothers.
Susan is Bill and Joe's sister.
They are Mary and John's children.
Susan is their daughter.
Bill and Joe are their sons.
Susan's children are Mary and John's grandchildren.
Mary is their grandmother.
John is their grandfather.
John and Mary have 3 grandsons and 2 granddaughters.



Mary is Harry's mother-in-law.
John is Harry's father-in-law.
Bill and Joe are Harry's brothers-in-law.
Harry is Mary and John's son-in-law.
Ann is Mary and John's daughter-in-law.



ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 11

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Patsy Price
Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: -ly adverbs

Write the expression "carrots again" on the blackboard. Using different intonation, give the students an idea of how many different ways there are to say this expression like enthusiastically, disappointedly, quietly, loudly. Have the students repeat after you. Continue giving examples such as:

Thank you. (seriously, sincerely, insincerely)
Yes. (loudly, angrily, lovingly, romantically)
No. (questioningly, definitely, quietly, rudely)
Oh. (surprisedly, disappointedly, questioningly)

Write new vocabulary on the blackboard. Next, give each student a card with an expression on it and how to say it:

say "yes" politely

One student says his expression and another student or the class guesses how it was said. This exercise can be made easier or more difficult by changing the expressions and/or the adverbs.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 12

CLASS LEVEL: Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Diane Harskamp

SUBJECT: -ly adverbs

Write the following adverbs on the board:

angrily
beautifully
neatly
hungrily
loudly
fast
happily
terribly
carelessly
well
carefully
nicely
badly
messily
clumsily
quickly
slowly

Explain the meanings by demonstration, i.e. sing terribly, write your name on the blackboard carelessly, drive carefully, walk quickly, etc. To make sure they understand the meanings give the students commands to act out such as:

Write your name on the blackboard neatly.
Sing loudly.
Do your homework messily.
Dance clumsily.
Run quickly.

Next have the students ask each other personal questions about how they do things.

Examples:

A: How do you sing?
B: I sing terribly.

A: How do you dance?
B: I dance clumsily.

A: How do you do your homework?
B: I do it carelessly.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 13

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate

CONTRIBUTOR: Jeremy Rossiter
Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: Getting Things Done

Go through the vocabulary and structure needed to ask to get something done. Write the frame on the blackboard and go through some examples.

I'd like to have _____ _____.
(noun) (past participle)

Examples:

I'd like to have my shoes resoled.
power shut off.
phone disconnected.
watch repaired.
eyes tested.
living room decorated.
hair styled.
clothes altered.
car painted.

Next, divide the class into pairs, consisting of a "customer" and a "salesman". Each pair must make up a dialogue relating to a request for a particular service. The "customer" must explain what is wrong (if applicable), and what he/she wants done. The "salesman" must be as helpful as possible and give advice where necessary. Give the class some useful expressions such as:

I'd like to ...
Do you give estimates?
What will it cost?
How long will it take?
When will it be ready?
Is there a charge for an estimate?

Afterwards the students can act out their dialogues.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.14

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Julia Melynk
Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: adverbials of means (by _____ing)

Prepare a handout with examples of how you can answer a question and how you can get someone's attention.

Example:

How did he answer the question?

by nodding
by shaking his head
by frowning
by laughing
by groaning
by shrugging his shoulders
by gesturing
by scratching his head

When the students are familiar with the vocabulary, ask them questions and have them answer in one of the above ways. Then ask the students how the question was answered. Prepare the questions in advance so it goes quickly and so the above examples are appropriate responses.

Teacher: Can I smoke in the classroom?
Student: (shakes his head)
Teacher: How did he answer the question?
Student(s): By shaking his head

Example:

How did he get her attention?

by coughing
by clearing his throat
by tapping his foot
by snapping his finger
by whistling
by shouting
by tapping her on the shoulder
by nudging her
by poking her
by stamping his foot
by tickling her
by pinching her
by slapping her
by waving
by raising his hand

Teach the vocabulary and have the students practice getting their neighbor's attention. Also discuss which methods are acceptable to use with friends vs. with strangers, at the bus stop vs. in the classroom, in a fancy restaurant vs. in a cafeteria, etc. Roleplay some real situations where they might need to get someone's attention.

Follow-up Activity:

Divide the class into groups. Give each group a topic and have them think of as many ways as possible.

(over)

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How can you get rich?
How can you learn English quickly?
How can you make friends?
How can you lose weight?
How can you cure a cold?
How can you live to be 100?

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.15

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Julia Melnyk

SUBJECT: conditional (enough)

Write the following on cue cards:

I'm not confident enough to speak English.
I'm not brave enough to go there.
I'm not co-ordinated enough to dance.
I'm not brave enough to ask him/her for a date.
I'm not rich enough to buy a new car.
I'm not intelligent enough to learn it.
I'm not musical enough to play an instrument.
I'm not attractive enough to get that job.
I'm not interested enough to take another course.
I'm not confident enough to look for a good job.
I'm not a good enough writer to write a book.
I'm not athletic enough to play sports.
I'm not strong enough to do it.

Have student one give the statement on the card. Student two asks what they would do if they were strong enough. Student one makes a conditional statement.

Example:

A: I'm not confident enough to speak English.
B: What would you do if you were strong enough?
A: I'd speak English all the time.

Follow-up:

Ask the students to give you personal examples like the above.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.16

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate

CONTRIBUTOR: Mukur Christianson
Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: indirect speech

Make a class set of the skit (see back). The skit has two parts: 1) "A" tells "B" what he thinks about her (He's in love.); 2) "B" gets together with a girlfriend, "C", and they discover that they have a mutual boyfriend. Set the scene by telling the class the plot outline. One man has two girlfriends, but he doesn't know they are good friends. Go through the skit with the class and teach any new vocabulary and idioms. Make sure that their pronunciation is good. Then have them practice the skit in groups and roleplay them in front of the class.

Follow-up:

Have the students write their own skits using the above as a model. Divide the students into groups of three. Write several situations on the board:

1) You go for a job interview and then report back to a friend.
2) You go to the doctor and report back to a friend.
3) You are proposed to and then report back to a friend.

Part I of the skit is the actual dialogue between the person and the doctor, for instance. Part II is in reported speech telling another person what happened. Again have the students act their skits out. If this is the first skit the students have written, they will need a lot of help. You will have to correct the skits and you or the students will have to make copies for each member of their group. Encourage them to bring props from home or supply some for them. Often quiet students will blossom when they have a "role" to play.

(over)

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INDIRECT SPEECH: SKIT

PART ONE: Actors: A - a young man in love with
B - a young lady
Place: in a restaurant
Time: lunch hour

A: _____, you are the most wonderful person that I know.

B: Thank you. You're not bad yourself.

A: In fact, you're the most interesting girlfriend I've ever had.

B: Oh, come on. You're exaggerating. Maybe my good looks is influencing you.

A: Well, you are the prettiest woman I've ever seen. Have I ever told you that you're my idea of the perfect woman?

B: Really? No . . . Listen, I hate to break this up, but I have to get back to school. It's 1:15.

A: (groan) You Canadian women are so practical'.

PART TWO: Actors: B - as above, and
C - a girlfriend of hers
Place: in the library
Time: the next day after school

B: Hi, _____. I saw you with _____ yesterday at Primo's Restaurant. What were you talking about?

C: It was so romantic! He said I was the most wonderful woman he knew.

B: What?! He told me that, too.

C: And he also said I was the most interesting girlfriend he'd ever had.

B: Oh, no! He told me that same thing just last week.

C: Then he said I was the prettiest woman he'd ever seen.

B: He has no heart! He told me I was the prettiest.

C: Did he also tell you that you were his idea of the perfect woman?

B: (crying) Yes!

C: And did he tell you that you were . . .

B: Don't say any more. Wait 'til I get my hands on him!

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.17

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: indirect speech

Use the following variation of "gossip" to practice changing direct speech to reported speech using "said" and "asked". The students must know the appropriate structures and correct punctuation. Divide the students into groups of 4. Each group forms a line, one member behind another, facing the blackboard. The teacher takes the student at the end of each row and whispers a sentence to him. This could be done in the corner of the classroom. These students return to their chairs and whisper what the teacher said to the person in front of them. However, they must change it into indirect speech. The second student passes it to the person in front of him, etc. Finally, the person at the front of the row goes to the blackboard and writes the sentence on the blackboard, using correct spelling and punctuation. The other students must be quiet and not give any help. Correct the sentences and continue with other examples. The students within a group must switch chairs so that they all have a chance to write on the board.

Examples:

Teacher:	Students:
The big grey elephant ate my lunch.	Bev said that the big grey elephant had eaten her lunch.
Does the cafeteria close at 6:00?	Bev asked us if the cafeteria closed at 6:00.
Where are you going to go on the weekend?	Bev asked where we were going to go on the weekend.

This game is competitive enough without giving points. If the students won't be quiet while the "writers" are at the blackboard, appoint one of the students to be a "policeman."

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.18

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: sequence of tenses ("I think..." vs. "I thought...")

Write the following on the blackboard:

Ann: Mirta goes to bed at 12:30 every night.

Then give possible responses to this statement.

Mary: Yes, I know. She works in the evening.
or
No, I think she goes to bed much earlier because she has to get up at 6:00 every morning.
or
Oh, really, I thought she went to bed at 11:00.

Point out that if you are surprised and believe something else you could reply with the third example. However, you must apply the sequence of tenses because of "I thought". Even though the sentence is in the past tense, it "means" the present. Give the students a handout (example on the back). Go through the examples pointing out the necessary changes as follows:

present	→	past
present continuous	→	past continuous
will	→	would
can	→	could
may	→	might
must	→	had to
past	→	past perfect (no change in informal English)
present perfect	→	past perfect
present perfect continuous	→	past perfect continuous

Students often resist the fact that the past tense can "mean" the present tense, etc. If you give them enough examples, their resistance will lessen. Once you have gone over the handout, divide them into groups to practice making their own examples. Go over the conversational filler, i.e. "Oh, really." and point out the intonation. Also explain that in speaking, many people do not change past tense to past perfect but that this is informal English.

Statement Student One	Response Student Two
Mirta goes to bed at 12:30 every night.	Oh, really. I thought she went to bed at 11:00.
My husband has blond hair.	Oh. I thought he had black hair.

(over)

Sergio studies very hard.	Really. I thought he didn't work very hard.
Eva is going to Jasper next week.	I thought she was going to Banff.
Emily is talking to Patsy right now.	I thought she was talking to Elaine.
Redwane may go to Calgary on the weekend.	I thought he might have to work.
Ines will start working tomorrow.	I thought she would start today.
Victoria can sing very well.	I thought she could only play the piano.
Fouzia must go to the dentist this afternoon.	I thought she had to go tomorrow.
Susan went to the library this morning.	I thought she had gone to the cafeteria. (went)
Landy applied for several jobs last week.	I thought he had applied for only one.
Ines has quit her job.	I thought she hadn't quit yet.
Bev has lived in Edmonton for six years.	I thought she had lived here for only 3 years.
Sonia and Maria have been studying English for 15 weeks.	I thought they had been studying for only 5.

Note: There are many possible responses. These are the most straightforward. Before the students break into groups to prepare their own examples, point out variations, such as:

Student One	Student Two
Landy applied for several jobs last week.	I thought he had already found a job. or I thought he was still studying English. or I thought he wasn't going to start looking until next week.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.19

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Diane Harskamp
Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: embedded noun clauses

Have the students tell you what they know and don't know about Canada. Topics could include history, geography, government, education, banking, and climate. Write some examples on the blackboard:

I know what the population of Canada is.
I don't know what the capital of New Brunswick is.
I know that elementary and secondary education is free in Canada.
I don't know if immigrants can vote in city elections.

Variation:

Have the students tell you what they know about you or the other students in the class.

I know that you are from Winnipeg.
I don't know how old you are.
I know how many children you have.

You could also introduce other words like: assume, believe, imagine, think, conclude; for example, go over to a student who is wearing a wedding ring and say: "I assume you are married."

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 20

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: embedded yes/no and -wh questions

After the students are familiar with the use of embedded questions, have them apply what they know in a practical situation: for example, asking for information about an apartment, a used car or second-hand furniture. Initially, write a few examples on the blackboard:

I'd like to know how many bedrooms it has.
Could you tell me if (whether) there is wall-to-wall carpeting?
I'd like to know how many miles it has.
Could you tell me if the sofa and chair are the same color?

Ask the students for other possible questions. Then divide the class into groups and give each group a different situation. Have them practice asking and answering embedded questions as if they are on the telephone.

Example:

A. Hello, I'm phoning about the ad in the paper.
B: Yes.
A: Could you tell me how much the rent is?
B: It's $250 a month.
A: I'd also like to know if there are laundry facilities.
B: Yes. There is a washer and dryer in the basement.
etc.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 21

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Patsy Price

SUBJECT: indirect objects (review)

Write the following words on index cards:

give	read	describe	tell	lend
explain	announce	pass	repeat	suggest
bring	take	make	do	close
buy	get	teach	send	cash
report	prescribe	mention	say	ask*
change	show	find	open	wish*

The first student asks a "what" question and a "why" question in the past tense. The second student answers the questions as in the models below, using some imagination:

GIVE

A: What did John give (to) Mary?
B: He gave her a watch.
A: Why did he give it to her?
B: Because it was her birthday.

PRESCRIBE

A: What did the doctor prescribe for you?
B: He prescribed an antibiotic for me.
A: Why did he prescribe it for you?
B: Because I had an ear infection.

ASK

A: What did Bev ask Peter?
B: She asked him a question.
A: Why did she ask him (that)?
B: Because she wanted to wake him up.

Proceed with the other verbs using the cards as cues. If a verb can be used with two patterns, permit either. Encourage, but don't require, pronouns in the second question.

* Do these separately as the pronouns don't work the same.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 22

CLASS LEVEL: Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Inger Smith
Ada Nanning

SUBJECT: food/senses

Make a fruit salad in class. The day before the activity make up a handout listing all the activities the students will do. At the same time you could introduce senses vocabulary, such as: sweet, sour, bland, delicious, etc. The next day bring the ingredients: fruit, a carrot, raisins, walnuts, a can of fruit juice and whatever else would taste good in a fruit salad. Bring the necessary utensils. Give everyone a job to do.

Examples:

-chop the apples
-grate the carrots
-slice the bananas
-chop the walnuts
-peel the orange
-cube the pineapple
-open the can of juice with a can opener
-add the raisins
-mix everything together
-stir in ...
-serve ...
-eat the fruit salad
-wash the dishes
-clean up

As the class prepares the salad, review the senses vocabulary, introduce additional vocabulary and expressions like "Would you like _____?" and "Do you like _____?".

Follow-up:

Teach the past tense of the above verbs. Make up a story about what the class did.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 23

CLASS LEVEL: Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Julia Melnyk

SUBJECT: senses vocabulary

Teach each sense and the related adjectives using actual objects or pictures such as: spices, perfume, small individual food items, and objects in the classroom. This realia is easily brought from home and it is invaluable when trying to each difficult words like: bitter, bland, rough, sharp, and wet. Keep them in a bag for future use.

SMELL: glue (strong)
vinegar (good/bad)
perfume (sweet)

TASTE: lemon (sour)
sugar (sweet)
cracker (salty)
unsweetened chocolate (bitter)
chili powder (hot/spicy)
pablum (bland)

TOUCH: sandpaper (rough)
fur (soft)
silk scarf (silky)
table (smooth)
coffee (hot)
ice cream (cold)
paper towel (wet/dry)
pencil (dull/sharp)

HEAR: bell (loud/soft)
scratch on the blackboard (terrible)

SEE: pictures of various things (beautiful, ugly, happy, sad)

When students are familiar with the vocabulary, have them ask each other questions about the objects.

Examples:

How does it smell?	It smells strong.
How does it taste?	It tastes bitter.
How does it feel?	It feels rough.
How does it sound?	It sounds loud.
How does it look?	It looks beautiful.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 24

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic **CONTRIBUTOR:** Patsy Price

SUBJECT: passive voice

Write various transitive commands on index cards:

Squeeze Tom's arm.
Take Ok Ja's book.
Write your name on the blackboard.
Pull Marta's hair.
Pinch Istvan's arm.

One student at a time draws a card and carries out the action. The teacher then asks a student (actor, receiver, or observer) what happened to the receiver. The question may take two forms:

1. "What happened to Marta's hair?"
   or
2. "What happened to Marta?"

The second is more natural, but the first may be necessary at the beginning. The students answer with a passive sentence in the past tense:

"Marta's hair was pulled."

Variation:

This could also be done with present continuous tense:

"Marta's hair is being pulled."

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.25

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Patsy Price

SUBJECT: past continuous

The following are possible ways to present <u>past continuous</u>:

1. <u>Interrupted action</u> - pantomime

write on blackboard - slam door
look out window - ask him/her a question
write in notebook - knock
talk to X - drop pencil

Assign one pair of actions at a time. After each ask:

What were you doing when B _____-ed?
What did you do while A was _____-ing?
What was A doing when B _____-ed?

Write the sentences on the board:

A was writing on the blackboard when B slammed the door.
While A was looking out the window, B asked him a question.
B knocked while A was writing in her notebook.
When B dropped her pencil, A and C were talking.

Underline the verbs. **Write the verbs on the board in columns.**

<u>Past continuous</u>	<u>Simple past</u>
was writing	slammed
was looking	asked
was writing	knocked
were talking	dropped

Go back to the sentences; have the students tell you which action started first; label the actions "1" and "2". Get across the concepts of duration and interruption.

2. <u>Interrupted action</u> - pantomime

Write on index cards: dance, sing, talk, write, walk, jump, skip, shake hands, etc. Let 4 students at a time choose the cards. Have them all do their action at the same time for 10 seconds. Have one student slam the door or drop a pencil or book in the middle of the actions. Go through the questions in #1 plus "When did B slam the door?"

3. <u>When vs. while; word order</u>

Only with very analytical classes: point out that <u>when</u> can be

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used with either action, but that while may be used only with the action which has duration. Also show that the subordinate clause may be placed first, using a comma, rather than at the end without a comma.

4. Simultaneous actions - pantomime

   Use action cards and 4 simultaneous actions. Ask: "What was A doing while B was _____-ing?"

5. Simultaneous actions - pictures

   Use pictures with 2 actions and have students make up sentences:

   A (was) _____-ing while B (was) _____-ing.
   A (were) _____-ing while B (was) _____-ing.

6. Action at point in time - pantomime

   Give action card to some students. Get them all to do their action for 10 seconds while the others watch the clock as the second hand crosses 12.

   Ask: "What were you doing at 2:03? What was he doing at 2:03?" etc.

7. Action at point in time

   Have students ask each other questions:

   What were you doing at 8 p.m. yesterday?
   What were you doing at 7:00 this morning?
   etc.

8. Action at point in time - worksheet

   Make up a worksheet with the names of the students in questions such as:

   What was Maria doing at midnight last night?
   What was Peter doing at 9:00 this morning?

   Students must get the information from each other before writing answers.

9. Summary

   For analytical students only: Point out that past continuous tense can be used only with interrupted action, simultaneous actions, and action at a point in time (Ignore certain other stylistic uses such as in story-telling.)

10. Interrupted action vs. sequence

    Use pictures with single action with duration. Ask students to imagine that they were doing a particular action yesterday when

their friend came.

What were you doing when your friend came?
I was eating.

Then continue: What did you do when your friend came?
I stopped eating. Or I asked him to join me. etc.

Perhaps stop and act out a couple of such situations before continuing with the pictures.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 26

CLASS LEVEL: Basic/High Basic CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: future tense with "will" or "going to"

Have the students write fortunes. Do a few examples on the blackboard first; then have them write one on a small piece of paper. The teacher should write one as well.

Examples:

You will win a million dollars in the Olympic Lottery.
You will go on a long holiday to France.
You are going to speak English very well in 10 years.
You are going to find $20.

While the students are writing the fortunes, circulate and check for errors. Also make sure that none of the fortunes are embarrassing or unclear. Finally, collect the fortunes and put them in a hat. Each student and the teacher draws a fortune from the hat and reads it to the other students.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 27

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic **CONTRIBUTOR:** Diane Harskamp

SUBJECT: past perfect

Show the students a picture of a person doing an activity such as eating out in a restaurant. Ask the students what the person had done before he went out for dinner. You could also ask them "Yes/No" questions.

Teacher: What had the man done before he went out for dinner?
Student: He had taken a bath.
He had combed his hair.
He had shaved.
He had phoned the restaurant for reservations.
Teacher: Had he eaten a snack before he went out for dinner?
Student: No, he hadn't.
Teacher: Had he had a glass of wine before he went out for dinner?
Student: Yes, he had.
etc.

Continue the exercise with the other pictures.
-a person taking a bath or shower
-a person skiing
-a person on a holiday in Hawaii
-a person sleeping

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.28

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: review of present continuous, future and past tenses

Choose a picture that would be easy to develop a story about such as a man cooking supper and obviously having some difficulty. Have the students make up a story about the man including: 1) what happened before the activity in the picture, 2) what is happening now, and 3) what will happen later. Start the story off and prompt the students with appropriate questions.

Example:

a picture of a man cooking supper, his children waiting impatiently at the kitchen table

Teacher: Last night Peter's wife fell down and broke her leg. She has to stay in the hospital for a few days. Therefore, Peter had to put the children to bed last night. What other things did he have to do last night?
Student: He had to make the children lunches for school. He had to phone his boss and explain his situation.
Teacher: What did he have to do this morning?
Student: He had to wake up the children. He had to take them to school.
Teacher: Was he late for work?
Student: Yes, he was 2 hours late for work, but his boss wasn't angry.
Teacher: It's 6:00 p.m. now. What is he doing?
Student: He's fixing supper.
Teacher: Has he ever fixed supper before?
Student: No, his wife always fixes supper.
Teacher: Is it easy for him?
Student: No, he's having a lot of difficulty. He's burning the supper, and the children are laughing at him.
Teacher: What will happen later?
Student: The father will throw the food away and he will take the children out for supper. Then he will phone his mother to take care of the children.

Now have the students relate the whole story again. Next give a student (or group of students) a picture. They make up a story using the past, present continuous, and future tenses. When they have finished, have each student or group relate their story. Later they could write them up as homework.

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Variation:

If you have access to tape recorders, have the students tape their stories. Go over the tapes individually with each group and see if the students can pick out any of their mistakes. Point out ones they miss. This is time consuming but very valuable. It may be the first time the students have heard themeselves on tape especially in English and the first time they have heard what mistakes they are making.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 29

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Diane Harskamp
Julia Melynk

SUBJECT: someone/anyone/no one

Blindfold one of the students. The other students go to various places in the room. The person who is blindfolded must find out where each student is by asking questions. The blindfolded student should be a good student who can ask the questions quickly. Otherwise the other students will get bored.

Example:

A. Is there anyone under the table?
B. No. There's no one under the table.
or
No. There isn't anyone under the table.
A: Is there anyone near the pencil sharpener?
B: Yes, there's someone near the pencil sharpener.
etc.

Later on when you teach everything, nothing, somebody, etc., you could use the following as supplementary material:

1. Give the students these definitions:
   a. A specialist is somebody who knows everything about nothing.
   b. A generalist is somebody who knows nothing about everything.

2. Teach the students the song "Everybody loves somebody sometime..."
   Everybody falls in love somehow,
   Something in your smile just told me
   My sometime is now.
   etc.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 30

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Jeremy Rossiter

SUBJECT: infinitive vs. gerund

Divide the class into groups of four. Each group has 4 white cards with verbs requiring infinitives and 4 green cards with verbs requiring a gerund. The students use the verbs to describe a holiday they had last year. After they have made up their sentences, have them share their holiday experiences with the rest of the class.

Examples:

White Cards (infinitives)	Green Cards (gerunds)
We remembered	We avoided
We promised	We practiced
We decided	We missed
We began	We risked
We expected	We finished
We hoped	We tried
We planned	We considered
We forgot	We enjoyed
We wanted	We kept on
We meant	We liked
We tried	

Group One

Student One: We decided to go to Mexico.
Student Two: We expected to stay there for 1 week but we stayed there for a month.
Student Three: We forgot to send postcards to our friends and they were very angry.
Student Four: We tried to sneak some presents across the border but we were caught.
Student One: We risked taking the presents across the border but we shouldn't have.
Student Two: We practiced speaking Spanish in Mexico.
Student Three: We considered staying for an extra month but we didn't have enough money.
Student Four: We liked eating the food and we all gained weight.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 31

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: infinitives

Divide the students into groups. Explain that you are going to give each group a "blank check" to travel anywhere they want. Have them plan their holiday using the questions below as a guide:

What must you start to plan?
Where did you decide to go?
When would you like to leave?
How do you prefer to travel?
How long do you intend to travel?
How much money do you expect to spend?
What do you need to buy before you go?
What do you hope to see on your trip?
What do you plan to take with you?
What will you try to buy on your trip?
What must you promise to send your teacher?
What must you not neglect to do?
What might you forget to do?

When the students finish planning their trips, have the groups ask each other questions about their plans using the infinitives above. Make sure that all the students in a group have a chance to answer questions so that everyone gets practice using the infinitive form.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.32

CLASS LEVEL: Basic/High Basic **CONTRIBUTOR**: Mukur Christianson

SUBJECT: another/the other

the other

Explain to the students that you use "the other" when there are two objects. Write the dialogue on the blackboard and then hold up two apples, one good and one bad.

Teacher: Would you like an apple?
Student: Yes, please.
Teacher: Here you are. (Hand the student the bad one.)
Student: This apple is not good. Please give me the other one.

Continue with other objects like two oranges, sandwiches, bananas etc. When the students are familiar with the dialogue, erase it and have the students practice in pairs.

Next plant the following items around the room: one glove, sock, boot, shoe, and earring. Put the remaining pair of each of these items on the desk. Pretend that you are getting dressed in the morning and can only find one of each item. Say the following:

Teacher: Oh, I hate to dress in the morning! (search around)
I have one shoe. Where's the other shoe (one)?

Continue but have the students supply the questions "Where's the other _____?" Have the students roleplay or practice in pairs.

another

Explain to the students that there are two meanings for another: "additional" or "different".

1) additional - Take several apples, oranges, chocolates etc. into the classroom. Write the dialogue on the blackboard. Then offer a student an apple. They like it and ask for another or additional one.

T: Would you like an apple?
S: Yes, please.
T: Here you are. (Give the student a good one.)
S: Great! May I have another one? I'm still hungry.

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2) different - Take in objects that a person might borrow from someone such as: pencils, pens, paper. Include one in each group that is somehow defective (the lead is broken etc.). Hold several pencils in your hand, one with a broken lead. Write the dialogue on the blackboard.

S: Can I borrow a pencil?
T: Sure. (Give the student the broken one.)
S: This pencil is broken. Could you give me another one?
T: (Give the student a different one.)

Continue with the other objects having the students practice in pairs.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 33

CLASS LEVEL: Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Inger Smith

SUBJECT: adjectives

Sketch a fierce animal on the board. Draw stick men in relation to the animal and label how they feel. A stick man in the animal's jaws is terrified. A small stick man attacking it with a sword is daring. The animal is fierce. Someone a bit farther away from the animal is frightened, and someone even farther away might be merely afraid or scared. Draw a fence. Someone on the opposite side of the fence is safe. You can sketch another picture as a sequence in which the animal is dead, and get resulting reponses. This does not require much artistic skill and it helps the students to remember the difference between the adjectives. Next label the stick men with students' names. Ask the students questions, or have them ask each other:

How does Pedro feel?
He feels scared.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 34

CLASS LEVEL: Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Michael Aldcroft

SUBJECT: there is/there are

This exercise requires some artistic talent. If you can't draw, try to get one of your artistic students to do it for you. Start with a sentence like: "There is a street in this town." Draw a street on the blackboard. Then say: "There is a bus stop on the corner, and there are two people at the bus stop." Draw the bus stop and the people. Next have the students supply additional "there is/there are" statements. As they give the statements, draw the pictures on the blackboard.

After your picture is complete, point at something in the picture and make a statement like: "There's a bus stop on the corner." Continue pointing to things but have the students give the statements. You could write a short blackboard story as well.

Use coloured chalk to add variety to the picture.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 35

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: still/any more

Have the students pretend that they have not seen each other for some time. For example, it is 1999, and they are together discussing the past. The students ask each other questions using "still" and answer using "still" or "any more". Tell them to think about what things their classmates do now and use these as the basis for their questions.

Examples:

A: Are you still married?
B: Yes, I'm still married.

A: Do you still smoke a lot?
B: No, I don't smoke any more.

A: Can you still speak Spanish?
B: Yes, I can still speak it very well.

A: Are you still taking English lessons?
B: No, I'm not taking them any more.

To add variety, have the students elaborate on their answers.

No, I don't smoke any more because my doctor told me to stop.
No, I don't take English lessons any more because my English is perfect now.
Yes, I'm still married and I still love my husband very much.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.36

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: as soon as/until/I'd rather be...

Tell the students that they are in a boring class or at a dull party. Discuss how they feel (tired, bored, hungry, thirsty, sleepy, annoyed, angry etc.). Ask them what they would rather be doing.

Examples:

I'd rather be at home.
I'd rather be reading a good book.
I'd rather be studying in the library.
I'd rather be eating lunch.

Then ask them what they have to do until the class or party is over and what they can't do until it's over. Give examples such as:

Until the class is over, I have to sit here.
Until the class is over, I can't smoke a cigarette.
Until the class is over, I have to listen to the teacher.
Until the party is over, I can't go home.
Until the party is over, I have to talk to many people.

Then ask them what they are going to do as soon as the party or class is over.

Examples:

As soon as the class is over, I will go to the cafeteria.
As soon as the class is over, I am going to go to the library.
As soon as the party is over, I am going to go home.
As soon as the party is over, I will go to my friend's house.
As soon as the party is over, I am going to go home to bed.

Point out that you cannot use the future tense in "until" and "as soon as" clauses. Also you may find it useful to draw time lines on the blackboard to help explain the meanings.

Additional Practice:

Ask the students personal questions about the future, such as:

What are you going to do as soon as you know English well?
What can't you do until you know English well?

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 37

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: prepositional phrases as noun modifiers

Describe the following situation to the students. "You are in a department store and you need to buy some things. However, you don't see what you want. Describe what you want to the clerk." Write the dialogue on the blackboard, and go through some examples.

Clerk: Can I help you?
Customer: Yes. I'm looking for a black coat with a fur collar.

-a pair of brown shoes with low heels
-a purse with a shoulder strap
-a beige blouse with lace around the collar
-a large purse with several compartments
-sheets with matching pillow cases.

Give the students a picture of something and have them make up an example. The students can then practice in pairs.

ALBERTA VOCATIONAL CENTRE, EDMONTON.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 38

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR**: Mukur Christianson

SUBJECT: asking for repetition of some misunderstood part of a sentence

The idea for this exercise came from Harold S. Madsen (BYU) but the technique and examples are original.

Write a few sentences on the blackboard which have the basic parts of speech:

> I saw a mouse beside the refrigerator last night.
> John watched t.v. for two hours last night.

Explain that if somebody were to say this, and the listener didn't understand anything, the latter would simply say: "Pardon me?" However, if the listener only misses one word, he should ask a specific question.

Erase one word and replace it with a nonsense word like "bloop"; then make the appropriate question. Repeat for all parts of the sentence. Point out the strong stress on the question word, and the rising intonation pattern for this situation.

Examples:

> "Bloop" saw a mouse beside the refrigerator last night.
> Question: Who saw a mouse?
>
> I saw a "bloop" beside the refrigerator.
> Question: What did you see?

When the students understand the technique, continue the exercise orally by using a variety of sentences. For a lower class you may want to use only one tense to make the exercise easier. Also to make the situation more real, respond to the students' questions by answering, replacing the nonsense word with a real, meaningful word, again, putting strong stress on the word in question.

Examples:

Teacher	Student
I heard "bloop" talking to a friend.	Who did you hear?
I went to the "bloop" for some food.	Where did you go?
They're going to play "bloop".	What are they going to play?
They have been living here for "bloop" years.	How long have they been living here?
Please arrive before "bloop" o'clock.	When should I arrive?

ALBERTA VOCATIONAL CENTRE, EDMONTON.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.39

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: should/shouldn't

Pretend that you are kind of depressed or unhappy. Then ask the students how they might ask you what the problem is. They might come up with statements like:

What's the matter?
What's wrong?
Is there something wrong (the matter)?

Suggest other ways such as:

Gee, you look down in the dumps today.
You look kind of depressed. What's wrong?
You look down today.
You don't look like your cheery old self.
You look sad.

Then make up a few example dialogues including a "response" as to what the problem is and a "recommendation" of what the person should do.

Example:

A: Gee, you look down in the dumps today.
B: Yes, my sister is coming to live with us, but we don't have enough room in our one bedroom apartment.
A: Maybe you could find another place for her to live. (or some other suggestion)

Divide the class into pairs and have them make up little dialogues like the example and present them to the class.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 40

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: refusing an invitation politely/modals

Write some invitations on the blackboard:

Would you like to go to the movies tonight?
Do you want to go skating tomorrow?
I'm having a party next weekend. Can you come?

Have the students give you some other examples. Next write a few possible polite ways to refuse an invitation.

Examples:

I'm sorry. I can't.
I don't know if I can.
I've got to _____.
I might have to _____. I'll let you know.
I might not be able to because _____.
I probably have to _____.
I really should _____.
I really shouldn't _____ because _____.
I would like to but I have other commitments.
Maybe another time. I'm really busy this week.

Explain that Canadians usually give some reason or excuse why they can't come. Also explain that many Canadians will try to convince you to come even though you refuse at first. However, if you persist in your refusal, they will accept your reason.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.41

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Mukur Christianson

SUBJECT: used to/didn't used to

Explain to the students that they are all old people in an old folks home. Divide them into small groups. Have them act like they are old people reminiscing about the past. Each group should make up a few sentences. The teacher should circulate around the room and make sure there is some variety in the groups' examples. After a few minutes have each group roleplay their lines for the rest of the class.

Examples:

I used to drink a bottle of beer every day.
I used to ride my bicycle to work.
I used to smoke a package of cigarettes a day.
I used to wear glasses.
I didn't used to smoke a pipe.
I didn't used to take vitamins.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 42

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl
Diane Harskamp

SUBJECT: used to/didn't use to

Bring photos or books to class that illustrate how things have changed over the years such as: cars, women's fashions, men's and hair styles. Make a few examples using "used to ..." and "didn't use to ..."

Examples:

In the 1950's men's hair used to be short.
They didn't use to have long hair.

In the 1920's women used to wear one-piece bathing suits.
They didn't use to wear bikinis.

20 years ago, cars used to be bigger.
They didn't use to have air conditioning or radial tires.

Have the class give additional examples.

Follow-up Activity:

Have the students bring old photos of themselves or a friend. Have them make up sentences about how they "used to be" and "didn't use to be". Have them share their examples with the class. The teacher could do the same activity.

Example:

10 years ago I used to be heavier.
I used to have longer hair.
I used to wear glasses.
I didn't use to wear contact lenses.
I didn't use to have short hair.
I didn't use to wear expensive clothes.

ALBERTA VOCATIONAL CENTRE, EDMONTON.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 43

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic **CONTRIBUTOR**: Mukur Christianson

SUBJECT: had to/didn't have to

Tell the students about the story of "Cinderella" and her three sisters. Draw their faces on the board. Write a list of domestic jobs the board.

"had to"

"didn't have to"

wash the floors
babysit
cook meals
sweep the floor
do dishes
wash clothes

Ask the students what Cinderella had to do and what the mean step sisters didn't have to do.

Examples:

Cinderella had to wash the floors.
She had to babysit.
She had to cook the meals.

Her mean sisters didn't have to wash the floors.
They didn't have to set the table.
They didn't have to sweep the floors.

Follow-up:

Have the students ask each other personal questions about what they had to do when they were kids.

A: What did you have to do when you were a kid?
B: I had to wash all the dishes.

A: What didn't you have to do?
B: I didn't have to cook the meals.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.44

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic CONTRIBUTOR: Mukur Christianson

SUBJECT: How often? vs. Do you ever? (simple present)

Select pictures which fall into two categories:

1. typical actions (activities most people do on a regular basis)

   -brush teeth
   -wash clothes
   -take the bus

2. unusual actions

   -smoke a pipe
   -eat in an expensive restaurant
   -take a taxi to school
   -go disco dancing

Pull out a picture which must obviously fall under one of the above categories, and explain why. Contrast the two questions:

Example:

How often do you take a bath?
vs.
Do you ever take a bath? (Phew! Hold your nose.)

With typical actions we use "How often?" and with unusual actions we use "Do you ever?" Once the students catch on to the difference, continue the drill with each picture. First, have the student decide it it's typical or unusual and then have him ask the appropriate question. Write the dialogues on the blackboard and include possible short answers.

A:	Do you ever _____?	vs.	A:	How often do you _____?
B:	Yes, sometimes.		B:	Once a week.
	often.			Three times a year.
	but seldom.			Every Monday.
	but rarely.			On Saturdays.
	No, never.			Never, my husband does.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 45

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic CONTRIBUTOR: Diane Harskamp

SUBJECT: simple present

After the students have control of the simple present and can relate their own routines, the following activities can be used as additional practice and for vocabulary development.

Activity One:

Choose a picture of someone doing something that involves a preparation sequence such as a woman polishing shoes. Discuss what steps this woman goes through when she polishes shoes.

Teacher: What does she do every Saturday?
Student: She polishes shoes.
Teacher: What does she do first?
Student: She gets some rags and some shoe polish.
Teacher: What does she do next?
Student: She wipes off the shoes.
She puts on the shoe polish.
She polishes them with a clean cloth.
etc.

After you have done one picture with the class, give each student a picture or have them work in small groups. New vocabulary will come up and you will have to help them. Have them write down the sequence of activities involved.

Activity Two:

Have the students make up a daily work routine of a person with a certain profession like a truck driver, a teacher, or a mechanic. You may want to do one together with the class to give them some ideas. A nurse's daily activities would include:

She gives immunizations.
She takes the patient's temperature.
She administers medication.

Activity Three:

A variation of the above would be to make up a daily routine of a famous person such as Muhammad Ali. The students can use their imagination. Muhammad Ali's routine might look like the following:

He gets up at 5:00 a.m. He runs 4 miles and does 100 push-ups. Then he eats a very large breakfast. etc.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 46

CLASS LEVEL: Basic **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: present continuous and prepositions of place

Write the following dialogue on the blackboard, underlining the phrases to be substituted:

A: (knock, knock)
B: Come in. (yell from some part of the house)
A: (open the door, look around and shout) Where are you?
B: I'm in the kitchen.
A: What are you doing?
B: I'm cooking supper.

Then give a student a card with a room or place in the house on it. That student becomes "A" and begins to do an appropriate activity for that room of the house. If he is in the bathroom, he might be shaving. Choose another student to be "A". He goes out of the classroom and proceeds to knock on the door. Continue with the rest of the class. To make it easier, write the activity on the card as well.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.47

CLASS LEVEL: Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Ken Perry

SUBJECT: present continuous

Write actions on cards. Have each student (one at a time) draw a card out of a hat and present it to the rest of the class. The teacher should do one or two mimes first to demonstrate what is expected and to put the class at ease. Then have the students pantomime the action they have picked out of the hat, getting the others to guess the action, either in complete question sentences ("Are you smelling a flower?") or in shorter phrases ("Smelling a flower?") Adjust the specific content to reinforce vocabulary that you have been using in your classes. After all the mimes have been done, pass out a complete list of the sentences used.

Examples:

- -make a cake
- -drive a bus
- -skate
- -polish some shoes
- -play ping-pong
- -paint a picture
- -read a newspaper
- -do the dishes
- -taste the soup
- -ride a bicycle
- -smoke a pipe
- -open a can
- -smell a flower

As some of the vocabulary may not be known by all the students, it is a good idea to have a corner of the room (behind a movable blackboard for instance) in which to demonstrate the mime to a student who does not understand it.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.48

CLASS LEVEL: Basic CONTRIBUTOR: Laura Ho

SUBJECT: rooms of the house/prepositions/verb "to be"

The following is a game in which the students have to guess where something is in the house. I use a "duck" because it is quite a ridiculous idea for most students and it makes the game more fun. It helps if you have a picture or poster of rooms of a house. Draw a funny picture of a duck. Tell the class you are going to hide the duck somewhere in the house. They must ask questions to find its whereabouts. You can only answer with "Yes, it is." or "No, it isn't."

Example:

Student: Is it is the living room?
Teacher: No, it isn't.
Student: Is it in the bathroom?
Teacher: Yes, it is.
Student: Is it under the sink?
Teacher: No, it isn't.
Student: Is it in the bathtub?
Teacher: Yes, it is.

The person who guesses the answer gets to hide the duck for the next game and answers the questions. Some students may try to hide the duck in a really difficult place like in the oven. Encourage them to hide it somewhere that is not TOO difficult to guess. Also, if the students can't seem to guess it after many tries, you may have to ask the student to tell the class where it is.

Variation:

Tell the students that you have hidden a present or money for them somewhere in the house or classroom. They have to guess where it is like the above example. When they guess where it is, tell them what it is. For example it could be a box of chocolates. Actually bring a box of chocolates to class and when they guess what it is, give everyone a chocolate, practicing "Would you like a chocolate?" "Yes, please." or "No, thank you."

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.49

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Mukur Christianson

SUBJECT: present perfect with "already"

Make cue cards or hand out a list with negative commands such as:

Don't wash my wool sweater in hot water.
Don't invite your mother for dinner tonight, dear.
Don't eat any of that cake in the fridge. It's for my party tonight.

One student gives a command and another responds with:

"It's too late. I've already washed it."
(past participle)

These could be role-played in pairs and acted out in front of the class. Students could add a few of their own examples.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.50

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic **CONTRIBUTOR:** Mukur Christianson

SUBJECT: cause and effect use of present perfect continuous

Put "clues" around the room before the class begins.

Examples:

- -a half-eaten sandwich
- -cigarette butts in an ashtray
- -an empty glass
- -cookie crumbs on a table
- -an empty lunch bag
- -a magazine

When the class begins, explain that you are a detective looking for clues. Hold up or point out the clues and say:

> "Aha. There's a glass on the table. Someone has been drinking milk."

Give a few more examples and then have the students make the conclusion, i.e., "Somebody has been ____ing." Make sure that you think out each item beforehand so that the response is logical and fits the above pattern. You could expand this exercise with other clues.

- -There are some footprints over there beside the coatrack.
- -There are two dictionaries missing.
- -This chair is still warm.
- -There is smoke in the air.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 51

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: present perfect

Write a story using the present perfect about a couple who have been married for many years or use the example below. Read the story to the class. Then write the main verbs and phrases on the blackboard. Read the story again. Next have the students retell the story, using the written cues on the blackboard. They could also ask each other questions based on the story. Finally, hand out a copy of the story and read it together. For written work, have them make up their own questions for homework. The next day you could also give them a dictation based on the story.

Follow-up:

Have the students make up their own story about a young married couple, or about two old friends or enemies. Correct them and have the students read their stories to the class.

Example:

The Golden Wedding Anniversary

Frank and Mary Peters are celebrating their Golden Wedding Anniversary today. They've been married to each other for 50 years. To celebrate, they're going on a second homeymoon to Europe. They've never been there before. Frank has loved Mary since the first time he saw her. It was love at first sight.

Frank and Mary have never thought about a divorce. During their 50 years of marriage, they've never had a fight, but they argue now and then. They built their own home here at least 40 years ago. They have always known their neighbors very well. They've always gone to church on Sundays, and afterwards gone out for dinner. Fido, a female Saint Bernard, has been their pet since 1960. Their car, a 1927 Ford, is almost as old as they are.

They've had many happy years together and hope to have many many more. They are already planning to go around the world for their 75th Wedding Anniversary.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.52

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Mukur Christianson

SUBJECT: present perfect with "yet" and "already"

Relate the following situation to the students. "At 9:00 a.m. the boss tells his secretary what she has to do before the day finishes." Then write the duties on the blackboard:

1. Take the files to Mr. Hill.
2. Mail these letters.
3. Type the letters from the dictaphone.
4. Do the duplicating.

Then say: "At 2:00 the boss returns to the office. He checks to see what she has finished." Now get the students to change his requests into questions using present perfect and "yet", and point out possible answers.

Example:

Boss: Have you taken the files to Mr. Hill yet?
Secretary: Yes, I've done that already.
Yes, I have.
No, not yet.
No, I haven't.

Point out that because the work day is not finished yet, she can still complete her tasks. Therefore, present perfect is used. If the boss returns at 5:00, at the end of the day, he would ask "Did you finish all the work?" using past tense.

Additional Activity:

Get the students to releplay situations in pairs like the example above. Give each pair of students certain roles:

wife and husband
doctor and nurse
mother and daughter
teacher and student

Depending on the level, give them cue cards with duties listed on them or let them make up their own. To make it more interesting the students act differently like:

nervous
mean
quiet
scared
domineering
meek
lazy
friendly

(over)

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Example:

Wife: Have you taken out the garbage yet?
Husband: No, not yet.
Wife: Have you mowed the lawn yet?
Husband: No, not yet.
Wife: Well, have you washed the dishes yet?
Husband: No, I haven't done that yet either.
Wife: Why not?
Husband: Because I have been too busy!

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 53

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Julia Melnyk
Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: comparative/superlative

After doing a unit on comparative and superlative, show the students advertisements in newspapers or magazines which use the comparative and superlative structures. Ask the students to give examples they have heard on T.V. or radio.

Next, give each student a picture or object and have them make up an ad about it. Do an example with the class first. When they have finished, have them read their ad and post them on the bulletin board. Below is an ad about lipstick written by a student:

> SENTURK LIPSTICKS are more beautiful, more
> comfortable and brighter than the others.
> If you use them you will always seem SEXIER.
> SENTURK LTD.

Additional Activity:

Have the students cut out ads from magazines and make a collage.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 54

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Mukur Christianson

SUBJECT: superlative

Write the following on the blackboard:

A: Is your wife intelligent?
B: Oh, yes. She's the most intelligent person that I know.

Hold up a flash card with a noun and appropriate adjective written on it. Student A makes a question and student B must answer using the correct form of the superlative, either "the most _____" or "the _____est." B must also choose the phrase that fits with the noun. Write these possible substitutions on the board:

...I've ever (seen).
(tasted).
(heard).
...that I know.
...in the world.

Examples for cue cards:

dog-smart
English course-expensive
brother-funny
chair-comfortable
husband-handsome

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 55

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Julia Melynk
Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT:

Think up things that the students can compare. You could choose easy or difficult items depending on the class level:

fall vs. winter
an orange vs. a grapefruit
coffee vs. hot chocolate
a dog vs. a cat as a pet
a cigar vs. a cigarette
renting an apartment vs. buying a house
country life vs. city life
taking a taxi vs. taking a bus

Do an example with the class first and write the comparative structures on the blackboard for student reference. Then divide the class into groups and give each group something to compare. Circulate and help them with vocabulary. When they finish, have each group share their examples.

Example:

an orange vs. a grapefruit

An orange is sweeter than a grapefruit.
An orange isn't as expensive as a grapefruit.
A grapefruit is heavier and larger than an orange.
etc.

With a higher level class encourage them to vary the sentence structure such as:

More people smoke cigars than cigarettes.
A cigar costs more and smells worse than a cigarette.

There is more noise in the city than in the country.
It is more relaxing to live in the country than in the city.

A cat doesn't eat as much food as a dog.
A cat is easier to take care of than a dog.

This exercise is a good way to review various sentence structures and vocabulary as well as practice the comparative.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 56

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Julia Melnyk

SUBJECT: review of comparative and superlative (adj. & nouns)

Write categories on the blackboard such as: age, height, weight, job, salary, marital status, kind of residence, kind of car (year, make), and number of children. Then write three names on the board (either three men or three women). Divide the students into three groups. Each group writes a description of one of the people using the categories you have written on the blackboard. Collect the group descriptions, type them up and have copies made. The next day get the students to compare the three people using both the comparative and superlative. The students' descriptions might look like the following:

	JOHN	PETER	FRED
Age:	20	22	31
Height:	5'11"	6'2"	5'8"
Weight:	180	160	220
Children:	2	4	1

First have the students compare John and Peter, and then all three men. For homework, make up a written exercise with questions about the three men such as: Which man is the tallest? Which man has the most children? Which man is the heaviest? etc.

Variation:

Divide the class into groups of three. Make up a worksheet of questions using the superlative.

Example:

Who has the most children in your group?
Who is the tallest?
Who is the oldest?
etc.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 57

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Diane Harskamp

SUBJECT: comparative

Think of one of the students in the class. Give clues about who this student is using the comparative, such as:

Teacher: He is taller than Istvan.
He is thinner than Marta.

Student: Is it Henry?

Teacher: No, it isn't
He is the same age as Iva.

Student: Is it John?

Teacher: Yes, it is.

After you have done one example with the class, divide the students into two teams. A student on Team A gives clues to Team B. You could give points and make it a game, 40 points if they guess correctly on the first 2 clues, 30 points if on the third, etc. With a lower class, you may want to write the comparative structures on the blackboard for the students to refer to.

It is very important that the students get along well because these sentences are quite personal and could easily offend someone.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 58

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: superlative

First, ask the students questions about well-known facts:

What is the longest river in the world?
What is the highest building in the world?
What is the shortest day of the year?
What is the highest mountain in the world?

Some students may disagree about the correct answer to the above so produce the Guiness Book of Records and show them how to use it. To get them interested, point out photos and tell them a few unusual facts like the man with the longest mustache. Then write questions on cards for the students to look up in the book:

What is the coldest temperature ever recorded?
What is the widest river in the world?
Who was/is the oldest man?
What is the largest living thing in the world?

Try to make questions about things which are relatively straightforward because some examples in the book are full of complicated explanations. The students will have to have access to a copy or two of the book.

Variation:

If you have a higher level class, let them choose their own example from the book.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.59

CLASS LEVEL: any CONTRIBUTOR: Patsy Price

SUBJECT: reflexive pronouns

The following is a possible sequence for presentation of reflexive pronouns.

1. Object

Using pictures, contrast:

He's weighing the dog.	He's weighing himself.
He painted a picture.	He painted himself.
She's looking at a picture.	She's looking at herself.
etc.	

Put the paradigm of reflexive pronouns on the board and practice pronunciation. Go through other pictures.

2. Object

Give commands like: Hit yourself, slap, pinch, kick, scratch, etc. Have the students make sentences so that all persons, singular and plural, are covered.

3. Object with enjoy

Using pictures, have students ask and answer:

Is he enjoying himself?
Are they enjoying themselves?
etc.

If the students can handle it, continue with "When do you enjoy yourself?"

4. Intensifier

Do not bring up reflexives as intensifiers below the Intermediate level and then only mention this usage.

Example:

I met the Prime Minister himself!

5. By oneself

Using pictures, contrast:

He's having coffee by himself.
He's having coffee with his friend.
etc.

(over)

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Using other pictures, have the students make sentences following the same patterns.

6. By oneself

Ask the students:

What do you like to do by yourself?
Tell something you don't like to do by yourself.

To get it off the ground supply examples: go to a movie, eat, live, sleep, go shopping.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.60

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic CONTRIBUTOR: Patsy Price

SUBJECT: alone/only/lonely

The following is a possible sequence to follow when trying to contrast the use of "alone", "only", and "lonely".

1. Alone

Use pictures to contrast doing something "alone" vs. "with someone".

He's eating lunch alone.
He's eating lunch with his friends.

He's shopping alone.
He's shopping with his wife.

Ask the students what they like to do "alone" , and what they don't like to do alone.

2. Only

Give a command to one or two students or to a specific group such as women, students from a certain country, etc. Then ask the question.

Did Maria and Peter stand up?
No, only Maria stood up.

Did everyone clap?
No, only the women clapped.

3. Only

Think up some social situation to practice such as:

Would you like some coffee?
No, thanks. I only want a glass of water.

Do you take cream and sugar?
Only cream, please.

4. Only vs. Alone

Ask questions such as:

Who drives to school alone?
Who lives alone?

Who sleeps alone?
Who likes to go to movies alone?

(over)

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Then have the students make sentences:

Only Patsy drives to school alone.
Only Jack likes to go to movies alone.

6. Lonely

Show a picture of someone looking very lonely. Make the sentences:

He feels lonely.
He is lonely.

Then ask the students: Do you ever feel lonely?
Appropriate answers: Yes, I sometimes feel lonely.
Yes, I feel lonely when ...
No, I never feel lonely.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.61

CLASS LEVEL: Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Julia Melynk

SUBJECT: field trip to the post offfice

Teach the relevant vocabulary and a couple of simple dialogues a few days before the planned field trip. "Play" post office by having the students practice buying stamps, sending packages, etc. It helps to provide a few props such as envelopes, stamps, some dummy packages. It's a good opportunity to practice making change with real money, too. You can help the students find out their postal codes, practice filling out forms etc., as well. If the students are warned in advance of the field trip they may have things to buy themselves at the post office. It helps if everyone has something specific to do, if only to get airmail stickers or change of address cards. You can always write your own stamp needs on a few cards and distribute them.

When you first arrive at the post office point out the different sections and wickets, etc. Then have the students make their purchases. If you can, you should stand near the wicket to help out and see how the students manage. Point out the mail boxes, pick-up forms, etc., on the way out.

As a follow-up to the field trip you and the class could write a blackboard story with the teacher doing the writing and the students providing the information as to where they went and who did what. It depends a lot on the students' level of English. Even the most beginning class can provide one or two word answers to the teacher's specific questions such as: "What did Inez buy?" "What did Chun ask for?" That way the students are not expected to manipulate the various verbs, but they are able to piece together the information for the "composition". Give the class time to copy it down afterwards.

A higher level class could perhaps go on a tour of the main post office and see its inner workings. This could lead to a discussion of different countries' postal systems, technology, etc.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 62

CLASS LEVEL: Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Diane Harskamp

SUBJECT: prepositions of time/future or past tense

Make a sample of a calendar of events for one month in the life of a famous person such as Elizabeth Taylor. Give a copy to each student. Ask the students questions using "when". They answer with prepositions of time, i.e., in May, on May 3, on Friday, at 1:00, in the morning, etc. The month could be in the past or future depending on what you want to practice. Students can answer with short or long answers.

Example:

Teacher: This is Elizabeth Taylor's calender for <u>next</u> month.
When will she go to Las Vegas?
Student: On May 3.
Teacher: When will she be on T.V.?
Student: She'll be on T.V. on May 5 at 9:00 p.m.
etc.

After a few examples, have the students ask each other the questions.

<u>Handout</u>:

MAY:

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
New York 1	2	Las Vegas 3	4	T.V. Show 5	6	interview 7
Eddie Fisher 8	9	getting married 10	11	Toronto 12	13	London 14
Hair dresser 15	16	17	Hollywood 18	19	shopping 20	21
Richard B. 22	Paris 23	24	dentist 25	26	Montreal 27	28
29	30	movie 31				

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.63

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl
Julia Melnyk

SUBJECT: business letter asking for information

Give the students a sample of a business letter which asks for some information. Then give them a handout which lists the addresses of the tourist information centres of the provinces, territories, and major cities in Canada. Tell them to choose one of them to write to and ask for information, such as posters, maps, pamphlets. Correct their first drafts and have them rewrite them before they make the final copy. Make sure they know how to address envelopes and fold letters before you give them the envelopes. If possible, have them use the school as a return address so that when they receive their replies the other students can see what information was sent. It usually takes a few weeks to get replies so plan accordingly.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 64

CLASS LEVEL: Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: giving directions

Make a map of the area immediately surrounding your school or building. A two or three block area is sufficient. Put the map on a transparency or draw it on the blackboard. Use it to teach them vocabulary and expressions related to giving directions.

Example:

A: How do you get to the library from here?
B: Go out the front door.
Walk to Jasper Avenue and turn left.
Walk along Jasper Avenue to 100 Street.
Turn left and go one block.
It's the large yellow building on the corner.
A: Thank you.

Give them a handout of the vocabulary. Have them practice telling you how to get to various places around your school. They could also practice in small groups.

Variation:

If the weather permits, actually take the students outside and teach the vocabulary while walking along, or use this activity as a review.

Follow-up:

Have the students tell you how to get to their house. Tell them to think about it on the way home from school and then write it down to give to you the next day. Try to anticipate what vocabulary they will need to do this and teach some of the most important expressions beforehand. Some students drive, others walk or take a bus. Each of these requires some special expressions which the students may not be familiar with.

Also when you return from a field trip have the students tell you how you got there.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 65

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate

CONTRIBUTOR: Joan Neehall

SUBJECT: following directions

Teach the students how to make a macrame plant hanger. (If you can't macrame, teach a craft that you know how to do.) Select an easy pattern that involves only one or two knots. Make a handout with the instructions and diagrams. Divide them into groups and take them on a field trip to a local craft store. Each group selects their own materials.

Back in the classroom, teach them the knots and have them work in their teams, following the pattern. All my students really enjoyed this activity, even the men. It doesn't require a lot of money either because the students do only one hanger per group. It might be difficult for the group to decide who gets to keep the hanger however! The total time involved is about 30 minutes on four consecutive days.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 66

CLASS LEVEL: Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Ada Nanning

SUBJECT: review

When a new sentence pattern has been introduced to the students, they can practice the patterns in small groups using pictures of familiar vocabulary, such as food, tools, furniture, etc. This way they review earlier learned words (represented in the pictures or cards) at the same time as practicing the new sentence structure.

Examples:

New Structures: "and so", "and neither"
Review: food

A: Did you buy a pear yesterday? (shows picture)
B: Yes, I bought a pear, and so did my neighbor.

A: Did you buy an orange?
B: No, I didn't buy an orange, and neither did John.

New Structure: prepositional phrases as noun modifiers (the man with the _____)
Review: clothing/colors

A: Do you know the man with the brown pants?
B: Yes, he's my father.

New Structure: "but"
Review: furniture

A: Did you buy a sofa? (shows two pictures, one of sofa, one of chair)
B: Yes, I bought a sofa, but I didn't buy a chair.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.67

CLASS LEVEL: Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: present continuous vs. simple present

A beginning basic class often has difficulty answering questions. Mix simple present and present continuous tenses to test their listening comprehension by asking them the following questions:

Do you smoke?
Are you smoking?
Do you speak Spanish? (or whatever their first language is)
Are you speaking Spanish?
Do you drive?
Are you driving?
Do you drink coffee? (milk, tea, beer)
Are you drinking coffee?
Do you work in the library?
Are you working in the library?
Do you dance?
Are you dancing?
Do you speak English?
Are you speaking English?
Do you do your homework?
Are you doing your homework?

The key to the effectiveness of this activity is to ask them questions about activities that you know they actually do. That way the only variable is if they are doing the activity now or not. Don't give them any time clues like "now" or "everyday". Tell them to answer with short answers like "Yes, I do." or "Yes, I am." etc.

Start with a student who you knows smokes. Ask him: "Are you smoking?" Often a student will answer, "Yes, I do." If this happens, repeat the questions emphasizing the "are" and "smoking" or say "Now?" The student will probably realize his mistake and correct his error. Continue with other questions until they are tuned into listening to the right clues in the questions. Review on following days.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 68

CLASS LEVEL: Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Julia Melynk
Ada Nanning

SUBJECT: A Walk Around the Block

A walk around the block is a good way of introducing students with little or no English to field trips. It also helps to familiarize them with their surroundings. Begin by explaining what you're going to do. Talk about the weather, what time you'll go, how far you'll walk, etc.

Next take the students for a walk around the block. Point out the various things around you. Often the students will ask the names of things. If you walk by shops you can point out various items in the windows, name the kinds of stores, tell which ones are good to shop at. You could always stop for coffee somewhere, or go into a store and look around.

Back in the classroom "discuss" what you did. Ask specific questions to elicit short answers:

Examples:

How far did we walk?
How long did it take?
What time did we leave?
What kind of stores did we see?
What store sells flowers?
etc.

Have the students name the places and things they saw. You can write the new words on the blackboard. The next day review some of the vocabulary with pictures or blackboard drawings.

On this kind of field trip take advantage of everything and anything for possible vocabulary and discussion. If one of the students slips on the ice and falls down, talk about it. If a fire truck goes by, talk about it. Even the most routine walk can be a good learning experience.

Variation:

Collect pictures of street scenes etc. which show the items the students will see on the walk around the block. Familiarize them with the vocabulary and give them a handout of things they'll see. Have them ask each other questions before and/or after the field trip using the pictures.

A: What's this?
B: It's a parking meter.
A: What are these?
B: They're buildings.
etc.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 69

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: shortened forms (ellipticals) of infinitives and modals after "but"

First teach the students the elliptical forms of both modals and infinitives:

I can't go to the movie, "but I want to."
I want to go to the movie, "but I can't."

Then ask them to relate personal examples of the following:

Something you didn't do last week but plan to do soon.
Something you have to do but don't want to do.
Something you should do tomorrow but aren't planning to do.
Something you couldn't do but wanted to do.
Something you would like to do but can't do.
Something you would like to do but shouldn't do.

Make sure that you think up the above carefully before you go to class so that they make sense and are easy to answer. It's a good idea to write them out so that it goes smoothly. At first you may want to keep the infinitive and modals separate and after a few examples of each, mix them up. The students often come up with humorous examples:

Teacher: Tell me something you didn't do last week but plan to do soon.
Student A: I didn't do my homework last week, but I plan to.
Teacher: Tell me something you have to do but don't want to do.
Student B: I have to wash the dishes tonight, but I don't want to.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.70

CLASS LEVEL: any

CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: asking questions

The "hot seat" is a technique which involves the students asking someone questions. The first person on the "hot seat" should be the teacher. Tell the students to ask you questions about anything (almost!) Make sure everybody asks at least one question. When appropriate, correct their errors. However, because the emphasis of this activity is on communication not correctness, the students will attempt questions which they don't know how to express correctly.

The second step is to ask the students to volunteer in subsequent classes to sit on the "hot seat". You may want to make this optional as some students may be shy or feel threatened by being the center of attention. Other students will love it.

Bring in friends and put them in the "hot seat". Take advantage of speakers as well. It's an excellent exercise in listening comprehension. Students have to listen to the responses of the "hot seat" guest as well as to the questions asked by other students.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.71

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Patsy Price

SUBJECT: conversation groups

Conversation groups can be excellent situations for students to practice their English in a smaller group and in a less structured situation than is normally possible within the classroom. The folfowing are some guidelines useful in setting up conversation groups:

1. Select topics carefully so that certain grammatical structures and/or vocabulary items are practiced. The topics should be interesting to the students and it is good to give them some choice of topics. It is also beneficial if the students know the topic a day in advance so that they have some time to think about what they might say.
2. Appoint a leader in each group whose main duties are to get the conversation started, to make sure that everyone participates, and to keep the group close to the topic.
3. Stress that all members of the group have responsibilities to participate and to stick to the general topic. They should make the leader's job as easy as possible.
4. Teach the students a number of techniques to use to make the conversation successful. (Example on back) They include:
   a) getting a conversation started or restarted
   b) getting everyone to participate
   c) making someone stop talking
   d) keeping on topic
   e) getting to the point
   f) understanding other students
   g) being understood
   h) helping students express ideas

Before the first conversation you may want to discuss only "a" through "e". Then after they have had one conversation group, discuss the remaining points, asking the students what problems they encountered in their groups.

Variation:

Have the students write a composition after they have had their conversation. They write about their opinions on the topic. However, keep in mind that some topics are more appropriate for conversation only, whereas some topics are appropriate for both composition and conversation.

(over)

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The following is an example of a handout of techniques to discuss with the students:

a) Getting a conversation started or restarted

i. Prepare in advance. Think of what you may want to say and how you will say it.
ii. If the topic is one where the students are asked to tell something about themselves or their country, simply ask one student to explain.
iii. Make a very radical statement which you may or may not believe, so that others will argue with you.
iv. Ask another student: "What do you think about this idea?" and then state one possible point of view.

b) Getting everyone to participate

i. Use a lot of tag questions: "..., isn't it?" or "..., don't they?"
ii. Ask, "Is it the same in (your country?") (your family?")
iii. Ask, "Do you agree with what he/she just said?"
iv. Ask, "What do you think?"
v. Say, "He/She didn't mention..."
vi. Say, "I don't agree." or "I agree only partly." (Someone should ask you to explain.)
vii. Ask WH- questions, especially why and how.
viii. Talk to everyone, not just the leader. Take turns looking each person in the eye.

c) Making someone stop talking

i. Turn to another student and ask him/her a question.
ii. Say, "I would like to hear what somebody else has to say."
iii. Gesture with your hand to show that the person should quit talking. Use another gesture to invite someone else to talk.
iv. Say, "I think "X" has something to say."
v. Use some of the techniques mentioned in "b" above.

d) Keeping on topic

i. Say, "What were we talking about?"
ii. Say, "Weren't we talking about...?"
iii. Say, "But what about...?"
iv. Listen carefully to what the person is saying, and then repeat only that part which is related to the topic.

e) Getting to the point

i. Ask, "What are you trying to say?"
ii. Ask, "What are you getting at?"
iii. State what you think is the speaker's main point, and ask if that is what he/she means.

etc.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.72

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: indirect speech

Make up a few dialogues between two people such as a doctor and patient, bus driver and passenger, two friends. Tape two native English speakers other than yourself reading the dialogues. This way the students get practice listening to other people.

Play the dialogues to the students. Have them listen the first time. Then play again telling them that you will ask them what each person said. They must use indirect speech.

Example: part of a telephone conversation between doctor and mother

Doctor: What's wrong with your son?
Mother: He has a temperature and a sore throat.
Doctor: Does he have a cough?
Mother: No, he doesn't.
Doctor: Give him one aspirin four times a day. If he isn't better in two days, bring him in to see me.
Mother: Should he stay in bed?
Doctor: Yes, and keep him warm.

Teacher: What did the doctor ask the mother?
Student: He asked her what was wrong with her son.
Teacher: What did the mother say?
Student: She said that her son had a temperature and a sore throat.
Teacher: What did the doctor tell the mother to give her son?
Student: He told her to give him some aspirin.
etc.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 73

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Mukur Christianson

SUBJECT: would rather

Explain that the meaning of "would rather" is like "prefer" or "like better". Then use the following patterns for practice. Write the frames on the blackboard. Pictures or cards could be used for cues.

1. pictures of sports (or some other action verbs)

I don't like _____ (-ing verb). I'd rather _____ (simple verb).

Examples:

I don't like skiing. I'd rather skate.
I don't like swimming. I'd rather play ping pong.

2. profession pictures

I'd rather be a _____ than a _____.

Examples:

I'd rather be a doctor than a nurse.
I'd rather be a teacher than a janitor.

3. cards with opposite adjectives written on them

I'd rather be _____ (adj.) than _____ (adj.).

Examples:

I'd rather be fat than thin.
I'd rather be rich than poor.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.74

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: the use of past perfect and past tenses with time clauses: when, before, after

Point out to the students that we use the past perfect tense to show that one event happened before another. We also use "before" and "after" clauses to show this relationship. When "before" and "after" are used, it is not necessary to use the past perfect because these time clauses clearly point out the time relationships, i.e. that one event happened before or after another. However, if "when" is used, it is necessary to use the past perfect because of the possible ambiguity.

Examples:

Situation: There was a bank robbery last week. The police were called.

before/after

Before the police arrived, the thieves (had stolen) a lot of money. (stole)

After the police arrived, they questioned the employees.

when

Point out the difference in meaning and ask the students questions to check their comprehension.

When the police arrived, the thieves had driven off in a car.
(Did the police see the thieves drive away?) No.
When the police arrived, the thieves drove off in a car.
(Did the police see the thieves drive away?) Yes.

Next, use the following situations to practice using "when" with the past perfect and the simple past.

1. A thief broke into the Toronto Dominion Bank and stole some money.

Have the students tell you what the thieves had done when the police arrived.

Teacher: What had happened when the police arrived?
Students: The thief had broken into the safe.
The thief had stolen money.
The thief had gotten into his car.
Teacher: What happened when the police arrived?
Students: The thief drove away in his car.
Some policemen chased him.

(over)

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Some policemen went into the bank.
They questioned the bank employees.
They looked for fingerprints and other clues.

2. Situation: Some parents left their teenage sons at home alone on a weekend. The boys had a big party. When they returned home the house was a mess.

Teacher: What had happened when they arrived home?
Students: The boys had had a big party.
The boys had drunk all the beer in the house.
Their friends had broken a lamp.
Teacher: What happened when they arrived home?
Students: The boys ran upstairs.
Teacher: What happened when the boys ran upstairs?
Students: The parents got very angry at their sons.

3. Situation: There was a passenger train derailment (or some other disaster such as an earthquake, hurricane, plane crash, fire). Many people were injured. A rescue team was sent to the scene.

Teacher: What had happened when the rescue team arrived?
Student: A person in a passing car had phoned the police.
The police had phoned for ambulances.
A doctor who was a passenger on the train had helped some of the injured passengers.
Teacher: What happened when the rescue team arrived?
Student: The rescue team helped the injured passengers.
They questioned the engineer of the train.

Variation:

As a first step, you may want to use "before" and "after" in the above situations for clarification.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 75

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: socially-appropriate responses

The original idea for this communicative competance exercise came from Harold Madsen (BYU). However, the examples and technique are mine.

Think of a situation that calls for a response. Get the students to give some "appropriate responses", both informal and formal. Add examples which the students didn't think of.

Example:

Someone says: "Do you mind if I smoke?" What do you say?

a) "No, it's o.k."
b) "No, go ahead."
c) "Actually, I'd rather you didn't."
d) "Yes, the smell bothers me."
e) "I certainly do."

Discuss the meaning of "Do you mind..." and point out which responses are formal and informal.

Next divide the students into groups. Give each group a situation and have them think of several responses. Help them with idiomatic expressions and vocabulary. When they finish, each group relates their examples. Tell them which of these we would actually say and under what circumstances. Also, because many of the responses are idiomatic, you will probably have to give additional examples.

Follow-up:

Have the students make up short dialogues and act out the situations.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.76

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic CONTRIBUTOR: Mukur Christianson

SUBJECT: ellipticals: too/either/neither with simple present and future tenses

simple present

Choose four students to act out the model. Label them as follows: "the loser", "the loser's friend", "the winner", and "the winner's friend". Give the students the appropriate card:

I don't feel well today. (loser)	I feel great today. (winner)
I don't either. (loser's friend) (or Me either.)	I do, too. (winner's friend) (or Me too.)

Tell the first two that they are "the losers". They should act and look depressed. One makes the statement and the other agrees. The next two students are "the winners". They should act happy, even conceited. Now other pairs of students can roleplay similar situations. The teacher supplies cards with statements for the "winners" and "losers" to make. The "friends" have to come up with the appropriate elliptical response.

Examples:

My wife doesn't love me.	Mine doesn't either.
My children don't listen to me.	Mine don't either.
My mother-in-law doesn't like me.	Mine doesn't either.
My boss hates me.	Mine does too.
I feel great today.	I do too.
My clothes are expensive.	Mine are too.
My husband is handsome.	Mine is too.
I never make mistakes in English.	I don't either.

future

Do as above but choose two students to be the "optimists". One student makes a positive prediction about the future, and the other one agrees. The next two students are "the pessimists" and make bleak predictions for the future.

Examples:

I'll never learn English.	I won't either.
I'll never find a good job.	I won't either.
I'll always be unlucky.	I will too.

(over)

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In five years, I'll be rich. I will too.
I will never look old. I won't either.
I will get a good job. I will too.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.77

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate

CONTRIBUTOR: Julia Melynk

SUBJECT: talks by students

If you have a class of students from different countries, have them give talks on their countries. The topics could include:

education
marriage customs
food
sex roles
social problems
housing
geography and climate

Suggest the topic to the students and have them sign up to speak about one of them. Ideally, have at least 2 different countries represented in each group. Set a time limit of about 10 minutes per student and leave time afterwards for questions, comparison and discussion. Students should be encouraged to bring things to illustrate their talks such as pictures, photos, books, maps, clothing, etc. The day before the students' talks the teacher could talk on the week's topic giving the students an idea of what could be done and teaching them about their topic in a Canadian context. Check with the students before they present their talks to be sure they are well prepared and in case they need help with vocabulary or ideas.

Variation:

Have the students talk about something they are interested in such as modern art, a craft, music, etc. It's important that they choose a topic which they can show examples of. The other students will become more involved in what the speaker is telling them about and it's generally easier for the speaker if he can show something as well as speak. Do a few talks each week and check with the student beforehand to insure that their topic is appropriate and of general interest to everybody. Encourage the students to present their talks without notes. The teacher could be the first speaker to give the students an idea of what is expected of them.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 78

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Virginia Sauve

SUBJECT: taping conversations by the students

Have the students tape short conversations on the tape recorder. There are several steps involved:

Step One:

Break the students up into pairs. Ask them to have a 5 minute conversation. Suggest a topic or have them discuss whatever they wish. Pairs should not speak the same language if possible.

Step Two:

They listen to their taped conversations, trying to correct their own errors.

Step Three:

Together, they write out the dialogue as is, doublespaced.

Step Four:

They both work at correcting the mistakes.

Step Five:

The teacher corrects the written dialogue.

Step Six:

The students retape the corrected dialogue and listen to it, noticing the changes.

This activity takes a lot of time but it is worth it in correcting speech habits which have become set. It is especially useful for students who have been speaking fluently but incorrectly for some time. Hopefully the students will discover and begin to correct bad speech patterns.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.79

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Mukur Christianson

SUBJECT: how to disagree and agree to statements

The basic idea for this communicative competance exercise came from Harold S. Madsen (BYU). However, the examples and the technique described is original.

Write a statement on the blackboard. Then write 5 different possible reactions under the following categories:

a) Strong Agreement
b) Mild Agreement
c) Non-Commital Response
d) Mild Disagreement
e) Strong Disagreement

Example:

Somebody told me that Dr. Gonzales is a very good doctor.

a) Oh, yes. He's fantastic. He's the best Spanish speaking doctor in town.
b) Yes. He's not bad.
c) I don't know. I haven't been to see him.
d) Yes, but he sometimes does only a quick check-up.
e) I don't think so. He'd be better as an architect.

Next divide the class into small groups. Give each group a statement that they have to react to. They should write 5 statements using the above categories. Circulate to help students with idiomatic expressions and to correct their examples as they're done. A "group secretary" then recopies the statements onto a spirit master, and hands it in to the teacher for duplicating. Duplicate them and hand back the copies to the groups.

Set five chairs in a row at the front of the room. I put five signs on them as follows:

a) "Optimist" (strong agreement)
b) "Diplomat" (mild agreement)
c) "Fence-sitter" (non-commital response)
d) "Skeptic" (mild disagreement)
e) "Pessimist" (strong disagreement)

These vocabulary items don't match exactly, but the students thought it was fun to choose a particular chair. Write the original statements on the board.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.80

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Marian Rossiter

SUBJECT: recipes/food/following directions

Write a recipe on the blackboard. Point out the format and the information included. Next show the students pictures of food and discuss various methods of preparation such as grate, chop, slice, peel, boil, bake, broil, fry, etc. Then ask the students for a suggestion and write a sample recipe with the class.

Follow-up:

Have the students write up an easy recipe for something. Give a few suggestions such as:

an omelette
rice
steamed vegetables
French toast

After you have corrected their recipes, duplicate them and hand them out to the class to try out.

Variation:

This activity can be adapted for oral presentation of other activities such as:

potting plants
changing the oil in a car
defrosting the fridge

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 81

CLASS LEVEL: Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Ken Perry

SUBJECT: group compositions

To prepare the students to do group compositions, first do one or two blackboard compositions with the entire class. The teacher acts as scribe to write it on the board. I drew a picture of a blue cat with white whiskers and one blue and one white eye. Guide the students in the use of coordinators and subordinators. For the second composition choose a more difficult theme.

Then divide the class into groups of 3 or 4; give each group a picture such as a landscape with some human activity or buildings. Emphasize that the composition is to be a co-operative effort and that they must ask about vocabulary and spelling in English. As the groups finish, have one person in each group copy out the composition for the teacher. Give each group a number to keep track of things. Correct the compositions and have them typed up and duplicated. Hand them out to the students and give them a few minutes to compare the corrected version with their original. Choose important vocabulary and structures to elaborate upon in mini lessons.

The students like this because they put some of themselves into the composition. It is very encouraging to see their own original compositions in print.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.82

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: planning a summer holiday

Do a special unit on places to holiday in your province. Get pamphlets, maps, pictures, etc., of vacation spots, national and provincial parks. If possible, obtain the tourist information packets available from the Provincial Parks and Recreation Department and hand them out to the students.

Next, divide the class into groups of 3 or 4. Each group needs a map of the province. They decide where they want to go for their imaginary summer holiday. One student in each group should act as scribe to write down their plans. Put the following on the blackboard for student reference.

When will you go?
How long will your holiday be?
What form of transportation will you use? (bus, train, car, plane)
What route will you take?
Where will you stay? (campgrounds, hotels and motels)
Where will you eat? (restaurants, cook own food)
How much money will you take?

After they have decided the above, ask them what they will need to take along with them in the line of:

clothing (raincoat, swimsuit, light jacket, pajamas, etc.)
camping supplies (sleeping bags, tent, flashlight, etc.)
food (if they are going to picnic)
money (checks, traveller's checks, credit cards, cash)

After they have finished planning, collect their written plans and check them over. Hand them back the next day. Each group tells about their holiday. The students can ask each other questions as well.

Follow-up:

Have the students write a composition on their holiday. They could use the future tense or the conditional "if".

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUES

VOLUME TWO

Edited by Bev Ruhl

Cover Design by Pat Darling

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INTRODUCTION

History Behind the TT's

The TT's contained in Volumes One and Two of ESL Teaching Techniques were developed to make our classes at AVC, Edmonton more interesting and meaningful. Initially, they were passed around informally, and later written down for easy reference. We decided to publish them so that other teachers might benefit from them. Because the TT's are the result of sharing, we encourage instructors to duplicate individual TT's and pass them on to others who might benefit from them. The loose-leaf design allows for the TT's to be filed separately, reorganized, or kept together.

Volume One

Volume One contains TT's 1 - 82 which offer a variety of activities, both structured and unstructured, for use in and outside the classroom setting. They include practice of grammar structures, vocabulary enrichment, conversation, composition, listening comprehension, and Canadian customs. Many of the TT's incorporate the use of different teaching aids and materials. The class levels indicated on the TT's reflect those used at AVC and range from basic to intermediate.

Volume Two

Volume Two consists of TT's 83 - 130 plus a supplementary section on films appropriate for ESL students. Another feature of this volume is the addition of activities for advanced classes. There are also some general techniques ranging from ways to use newspapers and the news in the classroom to setting up a store.

The indices in Volume Two are cumulative, including the TT's found in Volume One. There are three indices to the TT's: grammatical, thematic, and general techniques and teaching aids. A TT may appear in only one or all three.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.83

CLASS LEVEL: Basic CONTRIBUTOR: Betty Rackette

SUBJECT: present continuous

Choose 32 pictures illustrating present continuous actions. Make up cards with sentences corresponding to the action in the pictures.

Examples:

The boy is eating an apple.

The woman is taking a bath.

Divide the sentence cards into two piles of 16 each. Arrange the pictures along the blackboard ledge. Next, divide the class into two equal groups, standing single file. Give a card to the two people standing at the front of the two rows.

At a start signal, the first two players do the following: 1. match sentence to picture, 2. take a second sentence card from the teacher, 3. take it to the second player in their team, 4. go to the end of the line. Continue in relay fashion until all sentence cards have been given out. The first team to match all their cards to pictures is the winner.

If a student cannot match the card with the correct picture, he must give the card to the next player who then tries. Vary the director of the relay. The students enjoy being in charge and reversing roles with the teacher.

To make it more difficult, have a few pictures which show the same action but differ in plural/singular for example.

Example:

The woman is singing.

The women are singing.

(over)

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Follow-up

After the relay, have the students change the sentences to the interrogative form or change the tense of the sentences.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.84

CLASS LEVEL: Basic/High Basic **CONTRIBUTOR:** Virginia Sauve

SUBJECT: adjectives of emotion/esteem building

"Feeling words" are extremely important to anyone learning a second language in order to release stress and to increase a person's self-expression and feelings of worth. Charades work very well to introduce adjectives of feeling early in a course.

On the first day, the teacher acts out a feeling and gives the students the word which describes it, such as: happy, sad, excited, frustrated, lonely, depressed, worried, peaceful, etc. Run through them for review.

On the second day review and add a few more.

Keep reviewing and adding new vocabulary and encourage the students to be more specific in answering the question, "How are you today?".

With a higher level class begin with charades but also use situations based on the question, "How do you feel when _____?". Make up a handout with some specific examples.

Examples:

1. When I have friends, money, and something to look forward to, I feel _____.
2. When I have no friends, I feel _____.
3. When I have no money, I feel _____.
4. When the teacher shouts at me in class, I feel _____.
5. When the teacher speaks too quickly and I don't understand, I feel _____.
6. When everything goes wrong for days and days, I feel _____.
7. When someone gives me a present and it is not my birthday, I feel _____.
8. When someone splashes muddy water on me as I am walking down the street, I feel _____.
9. When I do not have to speak or think in English, I feel _____.
10. When I am just beginning a new job, I feel _____.
11. When people compliment me on something I have done, I feel _____.
12. When someone I know dies, I feel _____.

(over)

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CAUTION: Be careful not to give a class too many words the first two days as they get very frustrated; in addition do not introduce words with very similar meanings close together.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.85

CLASS LEVEL: Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Marian Rossiter

SUBJECT: review of senses vocabulary

After students are familiar with senses vocabulary, the following activity can be used for review. Bring various items to class which have different textures, smells, tastes, and which make different sounds. Divide the students into pairs. Have one person in each pair blindfolded, or with eyes closed. The other person leads him around by the hand, having him feel, smell, and taste different things, and also listen to different sounds. The student being led has to describe the things he touches, tastes, smells, and hears. He must use the appropriate verbs--feel, smell, sound, taste. Then the students switch roles.

Examples:

How does it feel?
It feels soft.

How does it sound?
It sounds loud.

How does it taste?
It tastes sour.

How does it smell?
It smells strong.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.86

CLASS LEVEL: Basic **CONTRIBUTOR:** Marian Rossiter

SUBJECT: prepositions of place/there is/there are

Step One

Before class, place various articles around the room--in front of the door, behind the curtains, in the wastebasket, under a chair, etc.

Step Two

Divide the students into two teams. One student asks a member of the other team, "Where's the (ashtray)?" and the other student must reply, "It's (behind the curtains)". Continue until the students are familiar with the vocabulary and the prepositions.

Step Three

One student from team one goes to the blackboard, facing it. Then the articles are quickly rearranged.

Step Four

His teammates describe the scene using there is/there are. He must draw it as described by his team. Then a student from the other team goes to the board, and the same is done.

Each team loses a point for incorrect directions or incorrect drawings.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.87

CLASS LEVEL: Basic CONTRIBUTOR: Jo-Ann Kolmes

SUBJECT: review/following instructions

The purpose of this activity is to review structures and vocabulary, and to give students practice in following instructions.

Choose three structures to review, e.g. names of furniture, "can", and past tense. Make up a class set of cards for each review item.

Example:

Set 1 - furniture	Set 2 - past tense	Set 3 - "can"
What's this? _____	He's washing the floor. Yesterday he _____ the floor.	Can you speak Arabic? _____
What are these? _____	She's doing the dishes. Yesterday she _____ the dishes.	Can you ski? _____

Before the class begins, tape each set on a door or wall in three separate locations in the building. Make up an instruction sheet which gives the students directions on how to find the cards and what to do with them.

Example:

1. Go to the third floor. Go to room 317. Gill out a card on the door. Take it with you.
2. Go to the sixth floor. Go to room 616. Fill out a card on the wall outside. Take it with you.
3. Go to the basement. Stop outside the elevator. Fill out a card on the wall. Take it with you.
4. Come back to room 131.

(over)

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In class, tell the students that this will be a race. They will leave the classroom in pairs at three-minute intervals. Call two people to step forward, hand each an instruction sheet. Tell them they have to come back with three cards each, already filled out. Explain that they should help each other, and that they will be timed.

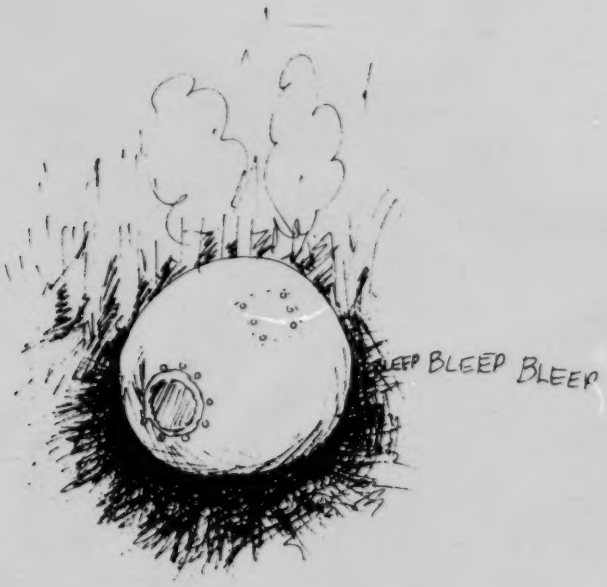
Jot down the times the teams leave and return. Check their cards for correct answers. You may or may not award prizes. If you do, you could award them to the fastest team and to the team with the most correct answers.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.88

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate/Advanced **CONTRIBUTOR:** Jeremy Rossiter

SUBJECT: infinitives/gerunds

The instructor has to prepare an unfinished story concerning a class outing. It should center around an unusual situation. The students will have to complete the story by telling how each person in the class reacted to the situation and by giving the final outcome.



Example:

The U.F.O.

One day last week the whole class went on an outing to Elk Island Park, about 50 km. east of Edmonton. While they were walking through the woods together, they came across a mysterious object standing in a clearing. The ground all around it was burnt and blackened and it appeared that the object had made a landing there. The object was in the form of a perfect sphere about 10 m. in diameter with a smooth shiny metal surface and a single round window at one side. It was standing on one foot and emitting a strange series of bleeps. Nobody in the class knew what it was but one thing seemed certain, it was a U.F.O. No one knew what to do although there was no shortage of ideas . . .

(over)

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The story can be given to the students either orally or can be typed out and circulated. Then, hand out a sheet with the names of each student on it, followed by a verb taking either an infinitive or gerund form after it.

Example:

Christian suggested . . .
Jacques considered . . .
Francine decided . . . .
Luc began . . . . . .
Anny preferred . . . . .
Michel promised . . . .

other verbs: promised, risked, meant, desired, forgot, encouraged, started, planned, practised, remembered, dreaded, etc.

When the students have filled in their sheets, individual students can be asked for their answers to each sentence.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 89

CLASS LEVEL: Basic **CONTRIBUTOR:** Marian Rossiter

SUBJECT: ordinal numbers/prepositions of place

Make a drawing of an apartment building (see example on back) Label the floors, i.e. first, second, third, fourth, etc. Put the students' names on various floors. Have two or three to a floor in some cases.

Have the students refer to the handout and ask each other questions like:

Where does _____ live?
He/She lives on the _____ floor.

Where do _____ and _____ live?
They live on the _____ floor.

In addition to ordinal numbers, the students can practice prepositions of literal place, e.g. below, above, beside, etc.

Examples:

John lives below Fredrik.
Maria lives beside Edith.

The teacher can also ask general questions like:

How many apartments are there?
How many floors are there?
How many doors are there?
Is there a basement in the apartment building?
How many people live on the first floor.

(over)

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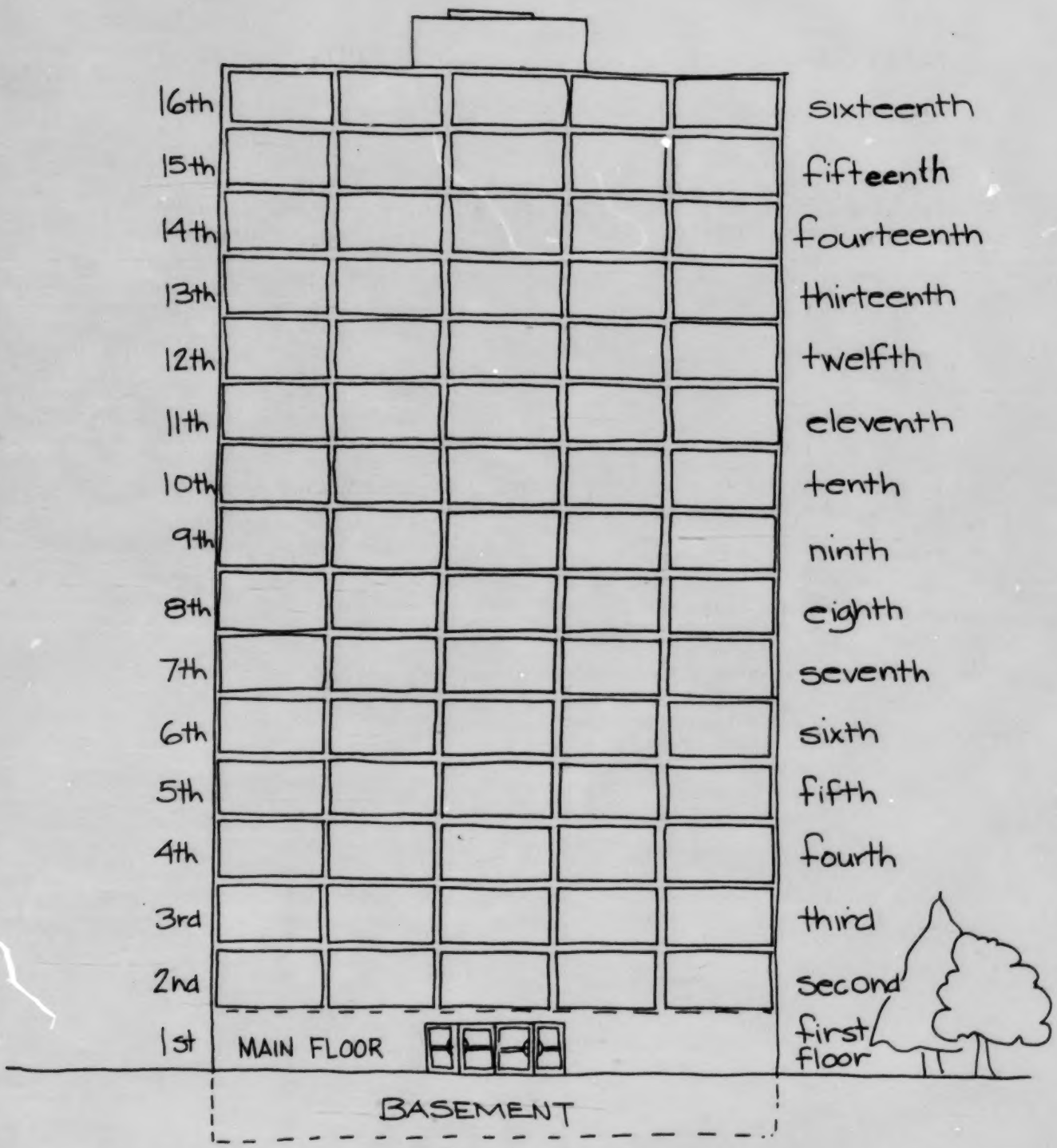
16th
15th
14th
13th
12th
11th
10th
9th
8th
7th
6th
5th
4th
3rd
2nd
1st
MAIN FLOOR
BASEMENT
sixteenth
fifteenth
fourteenth
thirteenth
twelfth
eleventh
tenth
ninth
eighth
seventh
sixth
fifth
fourth
third
second
first floor

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.90

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Mukur Christianson

SUBJECT: have to/had to

Write the following structures on the blackboard:

Do you have to _____?
Did you have to _____?

Give one or two examples of the statement/question format:

Teacher: "I had a car accident last week."
Student: "Did you have to call the police?"

Continue giving other statements, and have students ask you questions. Since more than one type of response is possible, it makes them think. If a student is stuck, feed him "cues".

Examples:

	Teacher	Cues
1.	Yesterday I broke an expensive plate at the Bay.	. . . pay for it
2.	My son cut his leg at the skating rink.	. . . get stitches
3.	I lost my bus pass.	. . . buy another one
4.	My mother is sick today.	. . . visit her
5.	My daughter has a piano lesson downtown tonight.	. . . drive her
6.	My husband's boss at work said his hair was too long.	. . . get it cut

Variation

Students could also use "will have to" where appropriate.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 91

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate/Advanced **CONTRIBUTOR:** Jeremy Rossiter

SUBJECT: job interviews

Choose four students from the class to act as a questioning panel. The rest of the class is then divided into pairs. Assign a job title to each pair of students, e.g. an E.S.L. teacher, a fashion model, a cook, a stunt man, etc.

The panel of four must then prepare questions to ask each "candidate". These can relate to experience, job preference, previous employers, special skills, etc. At the same time, the "candidates" can be preparing for the interviews.

Then, the "candidates" are interviewed one by one. The members of the panel take turns asking questions. Finally, they decide which candidate in each job category gets the job. In doing this, encourage them to use the comparative.

Examples:

Fredrik has more experience.
He is older and seems to be more reliable.
He is more aggressive.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.92

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Jeremy Rossiter

SUBJECT: review of adverbs

Choose a letter of the alphabet and write it on the board. Ask the students to think of as many adverbs as they can which begin with that letter.

Example:

"b" bravely
boldly
badly
busily
brightly

Next divide the class into two teams. Give each member of each team four letters of the alphabet. Give the teams two minutes to think of one adverb beginning with each letter which they have been given. Then each team picks a scribe who writes the team's adverbs on the board. It's a race! One point off for wrong spelling, two points off if someone can't think of an adverb.

Variation

This technique could be used with adjectives, or vocabulary, such as names of food or furniture.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.93

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: who subject questions/reported speech with commands/past of modals

Explain the following situation to the students:

> Mr. and Mrs. Jones went out for dinner last night. They left their 5 children home alone. Peter, the oldest boy, was left in charge. When they arrived home, the house was a mess!
>
> One lamp was broken.
> There was a burn mark on the carpet.
> The kitchen window was broken.
> There were crayon drawings on the wall.
> The cat had eaten two of the goldfish.
> There was water all over the bathroom floor.
> The fridge door was open.
> The oven was left on.
> There was a burned pot in the sink.
> There was mud all over the kitchen floor.
> There were crumbs on the carpet in the livingroom.

Have the students make up questions that the parents asked their children.

Examples:

> Who broke the lamp?
> Who wrote all over the walls?
> Who left the water on the bathroom floor?
> Who ate all the cookies?

Then have the students practice indirect speech with commands. The parents had told the children what to do and what not to do before they went out for dinner.

Examples:

> We told you to be good.
> We told you not to eat the cookies.
> We told you not to let the cat into the house.
> etc.

The students could also practice past of modals, explaining what the children should/shouldn't have done while the parents were gone.

Examples:

> The children shouldn't have eaten all the cookies.
> Peter should have watched his brothers and sisters more carefully.
> They shouldn't have let the cat into the house.
> They shouldn't have left the refrigerator door open.
> etc.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.94

CLASS LEVEL: Basic **CONTRIBUTOR:** ESL Staff

SUBJECT: possessive determiners/nouns/pronouns

Put a "Lost and Found" sign on a large box. Take it to class and ask each student to put one item into the box. Try to encourage a variety of items. Explain what the sign means.

Choose a good student to select items from the box and ask:

Whose _____ is this?

or

Whose _____ are these?

Depending on what possessive form you want to practise, the student who put the item in the box says:

It's my _____. or They're my _____.

It's mine. or They're mine.

Then prompt the other students to say:

It's his/her _____. or They're my _____.

It's his/hers. or They're his/hers.

It's Susanna's. or They're Susanna's.

It makes it more fun if the teacher puts a few surprises into the box, e.g. a pair of long underwear, a toothbrush, etc.

Variation

When students have control of possessive forms and subject and object pronouns, you can vary the "Lost and Found" activity as follows:

S1: Whose _____ is this?

S2: It's mine.

S3: Give it to me, please.

For plural items students would practice "they're" and "them".

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 95

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Marg Belyea

SUBJECT: comparative/adjective clause

Prepare a set of flashcards with statements such as:

Name a car which is faster than a Ferrari.
Name a man who is more handsome than Paul Newman.
Name a language which is more difficult to learn than English.
Name a country which is larger than France.

Give one as an example and have students think of some answers.

Next, give each student a flashcard. S/he reads the instruction to another student who must make up an answer.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.96

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: housing/newspaper ads

Review vocabulary found in ads for rental accomodation.

Give the students descriptions of people who are looking for housing. Tell who they are, what they are looking for, etc.

Example:

1. Family with 5 children. Father works as a clerk down-town. Needs housing immediately.

2. University student. Sinlge female. Smokes. Has very little money. Will be in Edmonton for 3 years.

3. Newly-married couple. Both professionals. Have a dog and a cat. Have their own fridge and stove.

4. Famous drummer with a rock band. Single male. Needs lots of space for his instruments. Practices every day.

5. Single mother on welfare. Has 2 small children.

6. Student. Single woman. New immigrant. Has a part-time job at night so she sleeps irregular hours.

Give pairs of students a copy of your local newspaper. They look through the ads in order to find housing that is suitable for these people.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.97

CLASS LEVEL: Basic/High Basic **CONTRIBUTOR:** Virginia Sauve

SUBJECT: who subject questions

This is a game intended to help students understand the use of "who" questions. Give the instructions one at a time, as they are too complicated to give all at once.

1. Give each student 4 pieces of paper. Ask them to write a statement about themselves on each one, to fit the following model:

   I like _____.
   (noun)

   Examples:

   I like bananas.
   tennis.
   skating.

   Have the students fold and clip them together and hand them in.

2. Redistribute the sets so that each student has a set belonging to someone else.

3. One student begins by asking, "Who likes _____?" Everyone in the room who likes that raises his hand EVEN IF he did not write it on his paper. The student continues to ask his other 3 questions. The object of the game is to discover whose papers you have by watching to see whose hand goes up for all four of your questions.

4. When the questioner thinks he knows whose papers he has, he may ask that person "Do you like _____?" for all four of his papers; then the questioner asks "Are they yours?" and the turn is complete if the person says yes.

Obviously, as the students are eliminated, it becomes easier to guess. When the point of the exercise has been made, you may want to stop the game.

Variation

Use "I like to _____."

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.98

CLASS LEVEL: Any

CONTRIBUTOR: Bruce Caldwell
Marian Rossiter

SUBJECT: question review/adjective order

Make a set of cards with articles, adjectives and nouns written on them. Divide the students into teams. Give each team 25 cards. During the time provided, each team must make as many phrases as possible from the cards.

At lower levels, this may involve only selecting an adjective that is appropriate for the noun and putting it in place with the noun and article.

At higher levels, this may involve making phrases with as many adjectives as possible, keeping the adjectives in the correct order.

Points can be given for each phrase, 1 point for each of the first three words, and three points for each additional word. The team with the highest number of points wins the round.

Example:

a	this	their	pretty	funny	children

dog	my	large	beautiful	car	kitchen

Phrases:

a pretty kitchen

their funny children

my beautiful large kitchen

Variation

Make a set of cards for students to make questions from.

Example:

when	John	make	friend	does	a	cakes

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are	how	do	his	you	we	is

Questions:

When do we make cakes?

How are you?

Is John a friend?

Teams receive 1 point for the first 3 words of each question, and 2 points for each word thereafter.

The teacher can circulate, helping the students add up points and checking for correctness. Teams could check each others' questions as well.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 99

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Betty Rackette

SUBJECT: listening comprehension/taped telephone messages

Find out what taped phone messages are available in your city. There are often taped weather, road condition and ski reports, as well as flight arrival and departure times which are available day and night. Others such as museum and library taped messages are only given after closing hours. Phone them and prepare questions about each one.

Next, assign students to phone and listen for specific information from the taped messages.

Sample questions:

What are the road conditions on Highway 16 West?
What movie is being shown at the museum this weekend?
What are the ski conditions at Sunshine?

Have the students make the calls outside of class time. Then they report back to the class, telling what information was given. Occasionally some of the numbers respond with a direct conversation! Prepare the students to reply, "Excuse me. I have the wrong number." or to ask for some information.

Follow-up

Have the students work in small groups to prepare taped messages and record them. Play them back for the other students to listen to.

Suggestions:

Give a weather report.
Prepare a report on road conditions.
Tell the times the museum is open to the public, what special displays there are, etc.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.100

CLASS LEVEL: Any

CONTRIBUTOR: Ken Perry
Julia Melnyk

SUBJECT: food vocabulary/polite requests/ordering in a restaurant

Select pictures of single food items. Make up menus to match the food pictures. Include prices on the menu. Lay the food pictures out on the tables in groups matching the organization of the menu, e.g. main dishes, beverages, desserts, vegetables, side orders, etc. Hand out copies of the menu; review the vocabulary for comprehension and pronunciation. Give the students enough time to look at the food pictures and compare them with the menu.

Next, designate a small group of students as customers in a restaurant; the rest of the students can be waiters/waitresses. The teacher can be the cook.

Create a restaurant atmosphere. Shy students might feel less inhibited, and table settings can also be used to introduce or reinforce vocabulary.

Introduce the structures commonly used in ordering food in a restaurant, such as:

May (Could/Can) I take your order?

Are you ready to order?

Yes, I would like _____?

Have each waiter/waitress take the orders of two customers. Then in turn request the food from the cook. After the "meal", the waiter/waitress adds up the bill. Customers can ask:

May (Can) I have the bill, please?

Repeat the above process with different students taking the roles.

Be sure to teach the students the polite techniques for getting a waitress'/waiter's attention.

Variation

At more advanced levels other standard structures and expressions can be introduced. The cook (teacher) can tell the waiter/waitress that they have run out of the item ordered. Then, the waiter/waitress must inform the customer. Other possible situations might be:

a complaint about the food

the customer is in a hurry

the customer is early and wants to wait for a friend to arrive before ordering

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questions about the ingredients and/or preparation of the food, e.g. pretend the customer has some specific dietary restriction.

Follow-up

The class could have a discussion on Canadian customs related to eating out.

Suggested topics:

tipping

who pays

table manners

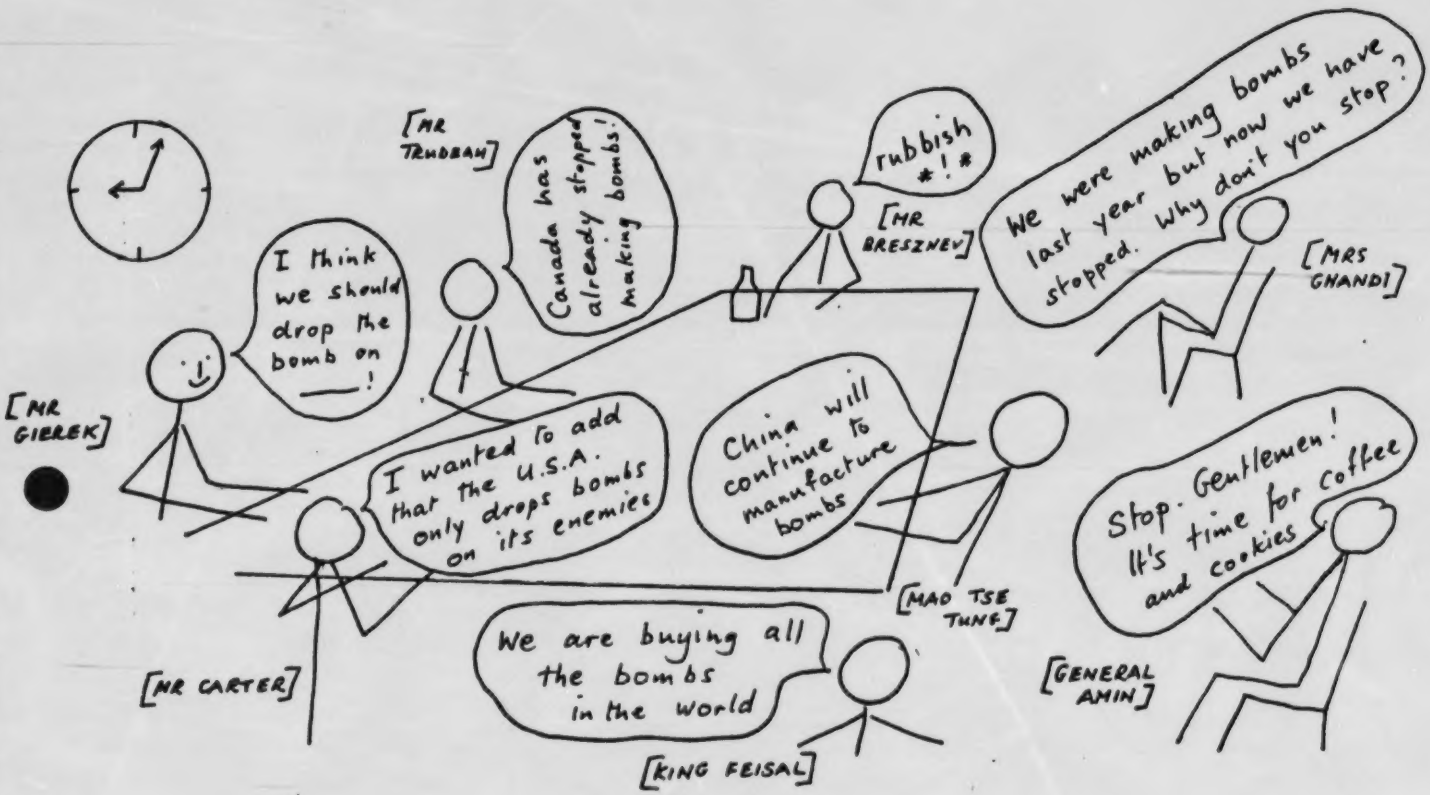
asking someone out to dinner (roleplay dialogues)

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.101

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate/Advanced **CONTRIBUTOR:** Jim Critchley

SUBJECT: reported speech

The following drawing represents a meeting of world leaders discussing a world problem:


[MR TRUDEAU]
Canada has already stopped making bombs!
rubbish *!#
[MR BREZHNEV]
We were making bombs last year but now we have stopped. Why don't you stop?
[MRS GHANDI]
I think we should drop the bomb on ——!
[MR GIEREK]
I wanted to add that the U.S.A. only drops bombs on its enemies
China will continue to manufacture bombs
[MAO TSE TUNG]
Stop. Gentlemen! It's time for coffee and cookies
[GENERAL AMIN]
[MR CARTER]
We are buying all the bombs in the world
[KING FEISAL]

The meeting is used as the basis for oral and written activities using reported speech. There are two possible approaches:

Approach One

The teacher prepares a cartoon drawing like the above example. The students roleplay the meeting, expanding on what the teacher has written. Next, they change what each leader said into reported speech, using expressions like:

She said that . . .
He expressed the opinion that . . .
He agreed that . . .
He added that . . .
He asked why . . .
He suggested that . . .

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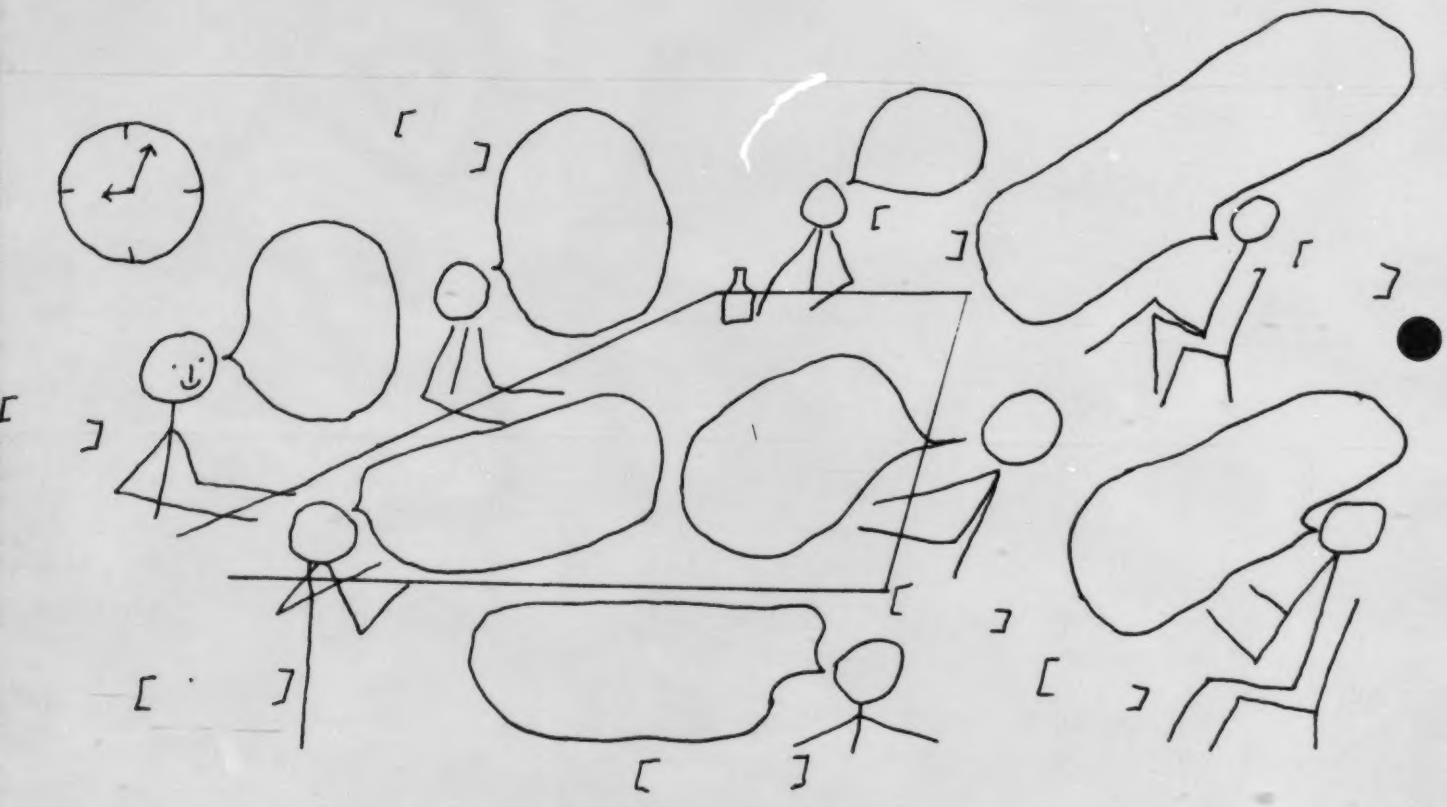
Then, the students write a composition on what was discussed at the meeting, who attended, etc. An advanced class could write it in the form of minutes or a newspaper article.

Approach Two

The teacher gives the students a drawing with the text left blank. The students, working in small groups, choose their own topics and fill in the text. Then the teacher has the students report orally (i.e. in indirect speech) on what the world leaders said. Finally, the students can do individual compositions.



ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.102

CLASS LEVEL: Any **CONTRIBUTOR:** Julia Melnyk

SUBJECT: travel/geography/telephone calls

This unit can be used as follow-up to lessons on Canadian geography, distances and directions. It can be adapted to almost any level of class, depending on how tightly or loosely structured you make it. You will need travel information on the Canadian provinces and territories for the students to refer to.

Step One

Have each student or pair of students choose a province or territory for their project. Give the students the appropriate literature and let them spend some time looking through it.

Step Two

The students begin planning a trip to their province. They must decide what means of transportation to take so that they can phone for the fare. Practice making phone calls in class inquiring about bus, train and plane fares.

Example:

Airline Office: Air Canada, Ruth Wall speaking.

Student: I'd like to know how much a round trip ticket to Montreal is.

Airline Office: Just a moment, please. (pause) It's $329.00. Would you like to make a reservation?

Student: Not yet, thank you.

After the students have made their phone calls, put the following frame on the board for the students to practice:

S1: Where are you going?

S2: I'm going to _____.

S1: How are you going?

S2: I'm going by _____.

S1: How much is the round trip fare from Edmonton to _____?

S2: It's $_____.

A higher level class could do a price comparison before deciding what means of transportation to take.

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Step Three

Have the students write letters asking for tourist pamphlets, maps, etc. on their provinces.

Step Four

Have the students make more detailed plans of their holiday, including what they will do, what they will take, the length of their stay, etc.

Step Five

Have the students write a composition about their planned holiday. For a low level class, the teacher could write a sample composition for the students to adapt to their own trip. Allow more freedom for the more advanced students.

Additional Activities

Have the students prepare a short talk on their province or territory. For a low level class give them questions to answer such as:

Where is it?
What's the population?
What's the area?
What are the major industries?

When they give their talks, they can also show a few pictures from the travel brochures.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.103

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate/Advanced CONTRIBUTOR: Diane Harskamp

SUBJECT: passive voice/adjective clauses/films

After the passive voice and adjective clauses have been introduced and practised, take the students to a theater presentation or show a film that has several characters and a story that could be retold. After the play or film, have students ask questions on what they didn't understand. Have them give summaries of the more important scenes in the play or film. Often the students can't remember the names of characters and therefore need to use adjective clauses to refer to them.

My students saw a play about a middle-aged woman whose young lover murdered her elderly husband. These are some questions that the students asked:

Why did the woman whose husband was murdered kill herself?
How old was the man who killed the husband?
Who was the man who spoke to the jury?
etc.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.104

CLASS LEVEL: Any

CONTRIBUTOR: Betty Rackette
Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: review/game

"Eye Witness Game" available from the Milton Bradley Company has a variety of uses in the ESL classroom. It consists of detailed color pictures of scenes at an airport, department store, school, party, etc. The game comes with a book of "true" and "false" questions about the pictures. The players study the pictures and then they are asked the questions from the book.

The questions provided with the game are too difficult for lower level ESL students but they can be modified by the teacher to make them appropriate.

Divide the students into small groups. Give each group a different picture. Tell them to study their pictures and ask each other questions. Then take the pictures away and give them the true/false exercise. When they have finished, give the pictures back and have them correct their own. Students at all levels really enjoy the game and they learn new vocabulary as well.

The pictures are also very good for discussion and individual or small group composition.

Variation

If you don't want to buy the game, you could make up your own version. Find a few pictures that have a lot of detail. Prepare true/false exercises and follow the procedure outlined above.

Example:

1. There is a cat on the roof.
2. There are two cars in the garage.
3. The man with a yellow tie is drinking coffee.
4. There are four chairs in the kitchen.
5. It's summer.

The exercises can be made easy or difficult depending on the level of the class. Use vocabulary and structures that your students are familiar with or you will spend too much time explaining vocabulary.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.105

CLASS LEVEL: Advanced

CONTRIBUTOR: Jeremy Rossiter
Marian Rossiter

SUBJECT: preparing political platforms

The following class conversation activity was conducted on the eve of a provincial election. However, the activity can (and should) be conducted as a hypothetical exercise and not related to "real" political parties and platforms.

The class is divided into groups of four students. Each group is asked to work together to prepare a political platform of a reasonably realistic kind and designed to win votes. The issues each group should consider for its platform can include: energy, social programs, labour and business, agriculture, money and taxes. Go through vocabulary that they might use, such as:

cut taxes
reduce unemployment
subsidize/subsidy
government control
welfare benefits
reduce inflation
tax relief
control of resources
new policies
reduce/increase spending
more funding for. . .
tuition fees
small/big business

After deciding their "party's" policies, the members of each group deliver their platform. When each group has done this, the whole class may vote to "elect" the party with the best platform. No individual may vote for his own party.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.106

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: comparative/used to

Make a list of adjectives which could be used to describe a person's character.

Examples:

outgoing	talkative
shy	organized
pessimistic	ambitious
optimistic	impulsive
aggressive	competitive
confident	materialistic
creative	friendly

Write them on the blackboard and go through the meanings of the words. Then write the following frames on the blackboard:

When I was younger, I was _____er than I am now.
I was more _____ than I am now.
I was less _____ than I am now.
I wasn't as _____ as I am now.

Have the students compare what they were like a few years ago to what they are like now.

Variation

Have the students use "used to" instead of "was".

Examples:

When I was younger, I used to be _____er than I am now.
I used to be more _____ than I am now.
I used to be less _____ than I am now.
I didn't use to be as ____ as I am now.

or

I am _____er than I used to be.
etc.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.107

CLASS LEVEL: Advanced **CONTRIBUTOR:** Jim Critchley

SUBJECT: reported speech

Roleplay with the students a cabinet meeting of the Canadian government. The teacher acts as Prime Minister and chairman. Each student roleplays a minister. The teacher prepares the agenda beforehand. It should be simple and include topics of interest to the students. During the meeting, the agenda is strictly adhered to in terms of subject matter and a specific length of time is alloted per speaker. Limited interruptions, however, are permitted, e.g. cheers, applause, disagreement.

After roleplaying the meeting, the students write up the minutes, using indirect speech.

The teacher has to prepare two handouts, one of the agenda, and the other of the minutes of the last meeting. (See examples below.)

Example:

CABINET MEETING
April 13, 1979
Edmonton

Those present: Prime Minister
Minister of National Defence
Minister of External Affairs
Minister of Finance
Minister of Indian Affairs
Minister of Immigration
Minister of Agriculture
Minister of Communications
Minister of Labour
Minister of Science and Technology
Minister of Health
Minister of Energy and Mines
Minister of Education
Postmaster General

Agenda:

1. Minutes of the last meeting.
2. Suggestion by the Minister of Labour that Canadians should be encouraged to have more babies because the population of Canada is small.
3. Suggestion by the Minister of Finance that the price of gas should be increased by 50¢.
4. Any other business.

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Example:

MINUTES OF CABINET MEETING, April 10, 1978

1. The Prime Minister said that he was quite satisfied that the RCMP were completely honest. The Minister of Education disagreed and said they were a bad influence on Canadian children.

2. The Minister of Health said that Canadians had very bad teeth. He suggested that candy should not be sold in stores. The Minister of Finance said that the government would lose $12 million in taxes.

3. There was no other business, so the meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.

Pointers

1. Keep the level of discussion simple with short contributions by each minister. Save the free-for-all discussion for another day.

2. Set up a conference table with name tags so it's more realistic. Also, it's easier for the students to remember who said what.

3. Ensure that the students are already familiar with a variety of indirect speech openers such as: he added, he mentioned, he asked, etc.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.108

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: superlative

The following group work is a good review of superlative forms of adjectives, adverbs, and nouns.

Divide the students into groups of three or four. Give the students a handout like the following:

1. Who is the tallest person in your group?
2. Who has the longest hair?
3. Who sings the most beautifully?
4. Who knows the most languages?
5. Who sings the worst?
6. Who speaks English the fastest?
7. Who does the most physical exercise?
8. Who has the most brothers and sisters?
9. Who has been in Canada the longest?
10. Who lives the farthest from school?
11. Who is the most outgoing?
12. Who is the oldest (youngest)?
    etc.

The students go through the worksheet orally comparing the people in their group. The teacher can circulate and check the students for correctness.

As follow-up, the students can write out the answers to the questions.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.109

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: comparative/superlative

The following exercise can be used as a review of comparative/superlative. The students compare the spending habits of 3 different families. The families represent three levels of income--low, middle, and high.

Prepare a handout like the following:

The _____ Family

makes _____ per month
spends _____ on housing
spends _____ on food
spends _____ on eating out
spends _____ on clothing
spends _____ on entertainment
spends _____ on babysitting
an average meal at home includes: _____
etc.

Divide the class into three groups. Assign one family to each group. The groups decide how their families spend their money and how much they spend on the items listed on the handout.

When the groups are finished, have them write their information on the blackboard and compare the three families.

Write the structures they are to practice on the board and go through some examples. Then let them work in small groups.

Examples:

comparative

The Brown family makes more money than the Jones family. (is poorer)

The Brown family eats more nutritious food than the Jones family.

The Jones family spends less money on clothing than the Brown family.

superlative

The Miller family makes the most money. (is the richest)

The Jones family spends the least money on eating out.

Variation

The teacher can prepare a handout with the information about the three families already on it. The information could be put on a transparency

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for easy reference. It takes less class time this way.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 110

CLASS LEVEL: Any

CONTRIBUTOR: Diane Harskamp
Julia Melnyk
Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: using the news

People living in a country where they don't speak the language are often cut off from what is happening in the world. They feel frustrated because they can't understand newspaper articles or news broadcasts. We have found that students enjoy reading about current events when presented in the following way:

1. Prepare summaries of a few news articles. One international, one national and one local story makes a good combination. If necessary simplify the vocabulary and structures to fit the level of your students. Try to slip in grammar items you have been working on in class.

2. Hand out a copy of the news to the students. Have them read it orally or silently. Then, go over new vocabulary, idioms, grammar, etc.

3. Read the news again and give the students the opportunity to discuss the articles and get more background on the stories.

Variation

The teacher can read the news to the students as a newscaster would, before the students are given a copy. They can then ask questions of the teacher for background or more explanation. The teacher can also ask comprehension questions.

Note: If there is something really interesting happening, the class can follow the developments on a regular basis. The summaries sometimes stimulate interest in the actual news article so the teacher might want to bring the newspaper to class.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.111

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Betty Rackette

SUBJECT: small talk

Discuss the use of "small talk" including where and when it is used. Then have the students write out their suggestions for topics and drop them into a box.

Throughout the course draw suggestions from the box. The teacher should relate it to some physical setting such as:

on a plane
on a bus
at a party
at a doctor's office
in a cafeteria
standing in a line
waiting for a bus

After the students understand what is expected of them, have them take turns initiating the conversation. Frequently, the class digresses from the initial topic, but this is acceptable.

Possible Topics:

the weather
a T.V. program
a sports event
the high cost of living
current affairs
family (children)
weekend activities
hobbies

Variation

Have the students roleplay the situations. For example, the students pretend they're getting on a plane. They find their seats and begin "small talk" with the person sitting beside them. They can find out where the other person is going etc., and then they can move on to the topic they drew from the box.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 112

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate/Advanced **CONTRIBUTOR:** Virginia Sauve

SUBJECT: field trip to a senior citizens' centre

This field trip has proven to be a favorite since it gives the students an opportunity to test out their comprehension and comprehensibility. In addition, it provides them with an interesting picture of one way our senior citizens fit into our society.

You can prepare for the field trip by watching a film on aging or reading a magazine or newspaper article on the subject. Then discuss various relevant issues. Talk about pensions, fixed incomes, inflation, retirement, and shortages of subsidized housing so that the students can be well prepared to ask questions of their hosts.

Make your arrangements with the individual centre. We visited an outreach project which was connected with a seniors' residence. There, the seniors gave us a tour of the facility and then served us tea and cake. They had many questions for the students and the students for them. It can be a very fruitful experience.

Follow-up with a composition. For example, "Compare the life of a senior citizen in Canada with one in your own county."

If there is interest, you could also debate the topic: "Old people should live with their childrens' families." (Many students felt very strongly opposed to senior citizens' homes and were very surprised to talk to seniors who preferred to live in this way.)

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.113

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Judith Cornish

SUBJECT: socially appropriate resonses

Write a short dialogue between a student (A) and another person (B) with whom the students might have to deal, e.g. at the bank, in a job interview, at a doctor's office, etc. Then take A's half of the dialogue and write it on a separate piece of paper. Do the same with B's. Your two papers might look like this:

Doctor's Office

A

B:

A: I'd like to make an appointment.

B:

A: Is there any time sooner than that? I feel really sick.

B:

A: Yes, that would be much better.

B

B: Can I help you?

A:

B: I have an opening for Friday next week.

A:

B: If you'd like to come in early tomorrow morning, he might be able to see you then.

(over)

Then divide the class into two groups and give half of the conversation to each group. Get them to try to figure out what the other person must have said to evoke the response given. The two groups then compare and discuss their ideas. The teacher can point out various appropriate and inappropriate responses.

Follow-up

Encourage the students to memorize various versions of the dialogue. Then do roleplays practicing the same or similar situations.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.114

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Judith Cornish

SUBJECT: comparative

The following game can be used as a review of comparative adjectives and nouns. Make a long list of adjectives with their corresponding nouns. Go over them with the students.

Examples:

long - length
old - age
cheap - price
etc.

One student acts as a salesman in a used car lot. This role can be rotated every few minutes. The other students are members of a big family who want to buy a car. They have to choose between two, a Ford and a Toyota. The salesman's job is to make a strong sales pitch for one of the cars. Students take turns asking questions using a "noun", and the salesman must answer using an "adjective".

Examples:

Customer 1: Are both cars the same price?

Salesman: Oh, no! The Toyota is much cheaper.

Customer 2: Will they go the same speed?

Salesman: No, a Toyota is always faster than a Ford.

etc.

If the class is broken into groups of four, everyone gets to ask more questions.

ALBERTA VOCATIONAL CENTRE, EDMONTON

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.115

CLASS LEVEL: Advanced **CONTRIBUTOR:** Jeremy Rossiter

SUBJECT: present perfect continuous

The following situations can be used to practice the use of the present perfect continuous. Students can work individually or in small groups. They can prepare dialogues for roleplay and/or use the situations for composition writing.

Situation One

The student imagines that he has summoned the police to complain about a noisy party in the apartment above his/hers. The policeman arrives and asks what the problem is. The student must describe the events of the last few hours, using the present perfect continuous tense. The situation could be expanded to include the policeman confronting the party-goers.

Examples:

For the last three hours they've been making lots of noise and jumping on the floor.

They've been playing their stereo very loudly and singing.

etc.

Situation Two

The student imagines that he is a professional sports coach and has been training a team for an international competition. The coach is being interviewed by a reporter and must describe his training methods, using the present perfect continuous.

Examples:

For the last six months, the athletes have been getting up at 6:00 a.m.

They've been running ten miles before breakfast.

They've been sleeping 10 hours every night.

They haven't been drinking or smoking.

ALBERTA VOCATIONAL CENTRE, EDMONTON

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 116

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Laura Ho

SUBJECT: simple past/past continuous

Bring lots of detailed magazine pictures to class. Distribute the pictures to pairs of students. One student is given two or three minutes to memorize the contents of the picture. At the end of the alloted time, the other student takes the picture and hides it from the view of the first. He then asks questions using the simple past or past continuous about the contents of the picture.

Examples:

Where was the coat?
What was the girl eating?
Who was sitting on the bed?
Where was the umbrella?

When completed, the questioner takes and memorizes another picture and the procedure is reversed.

ALBERTA VOCATIONAL CENTRE, EDMONTON

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 117

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Laura Ho

SUBJECT: present perfect/present perfect continuous/friendly letter

This is an exercise to practice writing with the present perfect and present perfect continuous tenses. You will need postcards from a variety of places. Discuss with the students what they will be doing before handing out the postcards.

Students will pretend that they are holidaying in the spot illustrated on their postcard. They must write to a classmate and tell what they have been doing, where they have been, etc. When the letters are completed, the students deliver them to the classmate.

As an additional exercise, the recipient of the letter can look for errors, correct them and explain the corrections to the letter writer.

Example:

May 15, 19--

Dear Bob,

I am having a wonderful time in Spain. I have been eating a lot of interesting food and drinking a lot of wine. My brother and I have seen three castles so far. The weather has been beautiful. There hasn't been any rain yet. Yesterday we went to the ocean. We hope to go to Madrid next week. I have thought about you many times since I left. Wish you were here.

Love,

Marie

ALBERTA VOCATIONAL CENTRE, EDMONTON

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.118

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate/Advanced **CONTRIBUTOR:** Jeremy Rossiter

SUBJECT: gerunds

Write the following phrases on the blackboard:

look forward to
get used to
be fond of
devote oneself to
be interested in
get interested in
get tired of
make a point of
be afraid of
etc.

The students prepare sentences describing their first few weeks in Canada. How did they feel? What did they do? Have the students share their examples.

Examples:

I looked forward to seeing new places.
I couldn't get used to wearing winter clothing.
I made a point of practicing English every day.

Additional Activity

The students can write a composition about their first few weeks in Canada incorporating the phrases into their composition.

ALBERTA VOCATIONAL CENTRE, EDMONTON

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.119

CLASS LEVEL: Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Pat Dunne
Elizabeth Amerongen

SUBJECT: senses vocabulary

Bring a variety of objects to class such as: an ashtray, a pen, chalk, a cup, a spoon, sandpaper, a lemon, salt, fur, etc. Have the students describe the objects using the senses vocabulary you want to review.

Then put a list of questions on the board:

Is it big?
Is it small?
Is it round?
Is it rough?
Is it hard?
Is it soft?
Is it dry?
Is it wet?
Is it sharp?
Is it dull?
Is it heavy?
Is it light?
Is it sour?
Is it sweet?
etc.

Set up two rows of chairs back-to-back, one row facing the board, the other facing the back of the classroom. Bring the objects around to the group facing the back. Give each student an object and tell them to ask, "What am I holding?" Then the people facing the board begin to ask questions until they guess what the object is. On another day, the roles of the two groups could be reversed.

ALBERTA VOCATIONAL CENTRE, EDMONTON

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.120

CLASS LEVEL: Any

CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl
ESL Staff

SUBJECT: having a rummage sale

Having a school or class rummage sale is an excellent way for students to practice English in a meaningful context. It also provides funds for class outings. The following is a description of how one can be organized and what activities the students can be involved in.

Step One

Decide on the date, place, and time well in advance so that there is sufficient time for publicity and collection of lots of items for the sale. Prep the students on what rummage sales are and what responsibilities they will have. You could also plan what you will use the proceeds for. That will provide an additional incentive. Make up a story about the sale.

Step Two - Publicity

Have the students make signs advertising the sale and stressing the need for donations; arrange a place for donations to be stored until the sale.

Step Three - Sort Items

Sort items as to women's clothing, children's toys, household items, etc. Also throw out items that are dirty, torn, etc.

Step Four - Set-up

A day or two before the sale, the room(s) needs to be set up, items arranged on tables, and signs made for each category, for example men's clothing, books, games, etc.

Step Five - Price Items

With teacher guidance have the students price the items individually.

Step Six - The Sale

Students volunteer to be cashiers and baggers. Later on in the day, a half-price sale can be held for items not sold earlier.

Step Seven - Clean-up

At the end of the sale, students clean up and box leftover items to give to the Salvation Army or similar organization.

(over)

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Step Eight - Follow-up in Class

Discuss what students did at the sale; have them show each other what they bought; make up a blackboard story or have the students write a composition about the sale.

A rummage sale offers opportunities to introduce new vocabulary and idioms and to practice grammatical patterns. It's easy to adapt activities to different levels and student needs.

Suggested Activities

1. While students are sorting, the teacher can introduce new vocabulary. Encourage students to try on clothing and practice using expressions like:

   It's a size 14/15.
   It's too small/loose/tight/long.
   It just fits.
   It's beautiful.
   Try it on.
   Take it off.

   Students can ask the names of household items and what they are used for. Also ask students what they would like to buy at the sale and why.

2. During pricing, students can practice numbers and money expressions. Also students can roleplay short dialogues involving a cashier and customer.

   Student 1: How much does this cost?
   Student 2: It costs 75¢.

   Cashier: That's $3.24 please.
   Customer: Here you are.
   Cashier: Here's your change. Thank you.

   Prepare the cashiers for questions like: "Can I try this on?" or "There isn't a price on this item. How much is it?"

NOTE: Putting on a rummage sale is a lot of work but the students benefit a great deal. We have two rummage sales per year, and they get better and easier to organize each time.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.121

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Diane Harskamp
Julia Melnyk

SUBJECT: count/non-count

This exercise can be used as a follow-up after having taught count/non-count. Divide the students into small groups and tell them they are going to make lists, using "a", "an", "some" or a number with each item.

You can give them a choice of topics and have them do several. One person can act as secretary while the others contribute ideas.

Example:

1. You are planning a special meal. Make a grocery list of things you will buy.

2. You are going on a trip to _____. Make a list of the things you will pack in your suitcase.

3. You are going to make something. (For example, a table or a dress) Make a list of what you need.

4. You just got married and are going to move into a new house. Make a list of the things you will want to buy for the house.

The exercise can be expanded to include other count/non-count expressions such as:

a few
a lot of
a great deal of
a little
much
many
etc.

ALBERTA VOCATIONAL CENTRE, EDMONTON

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.122

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Julia Melnyk

SUBJECT: simple present tense

The following activities can be used for a review of simple present tense. They provide an interesting alternative to practicing daily routines.

Activity One

Teach the students the names for different kinds of people: a cheapskate, a spendthrift, a blabbermouth, a go-getter, a wallflower, a know-it-all, a soft touch, an early bird, a night owl, etc. Once they understand the meanings of the expressions, the teacher can ask them what each type of person does:

Teacher: What does a blabbermouth do?
Student: A blabbermouth talks too much.

The students can ask each other questions such as:

What does a spendthrift do?
Why is a person a wallflower?
Does an early bird get up late?

Activity Two

Ask the students what people in different professions do. This practices the present tense and expands the students' vocabulary as well. Possible occupations include: a busboy, an architect, a clown, a welder, a dentist, a policeman, a prime minister, etc. Pictures can be used as an initial stimulus. A written assignment can be given as a follow-up.

Activity Three

Bring a guest to class who has an unusual or interesting profession such as beekeeping. Have the students ask questions to find out what the person's profession is. Have the students ask only yes/no questions. It takes them longer to guess and they get more practice. It helps to warn your guest to answer only yes or no. This makes it more exciting and challenging for the students.

ALBERTA VOCATIONAL CENTRE, EDMONTON

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.123

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: passive voice/conditional

Write the following phrases on the blackboard:

bitten by a bee or wasp
bitten by a dog
bitten by a snake
kicked by a horse
slapped by a woman
robbed by a mugger
hit by a car
kissed by a Canadian
arrested by a policeman
stopped by a policeman
rescued by someone
yelled at by your boss
laid off by your employer
given a ticket by a policeman

Divide the students into pairs and have them substitute the phrases into the following dialogues:

S1: Have you ever been _____ by a _____?

S2: No, never.

S1: Well, what would you do if you were?

S2: I would _____.

or

S1: Have you ever been _____ by a _____?

S2: Yes, (when).

S1: Well, what did you do? or How did it happen?

S2: _____.

Encourage students to share interesting experiences with the class. As follow-up, they could write a short composition about their interesting experience.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.124

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate CONTRIBUTOR: Rendene Rutkowski

SUBJECT: modals/professions

Put the following list of job qualifications on the board:

1. He/She must be willing to work nights.
2. He/She must have proper tools.
3. He/She must be willing to take risks.
4. He/She should have a fast car.
5. He/She must not be afraid of the dark.
6. He/She should know a good lawyer.
7. He/She must be quiet while working.

Ask the students to guess who is being described. (Answer: a burglar)

Next, divide the students into small groups. Each group chooses an occupation and makes a list like the one above. Encourage them to use expressions like:

must		know how to
have to	+	be willing to
should		be able to
		have knowledge of

When they have prepared their lists, the teacher can correct them. Then, the groups read their lists and ask the other students to guess who is being described.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.125

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate/Advanced CONTRIBUTOR: Marian Rossiter

SUBJECT: telephone calls

This exercise gives students practice in making a wide variety of telephone calls. Before using it, however, the students should have experience with unstructured telephone calls. It should be used as an ongoing class activity.

Prepare a set of cards with one-line telephone cues on them such as:

I'd like to make reservations for dinner tomorrow night.

I'd like to make an appointment with Dr. Benson.

I'd like to order some food to be delivered tonight.

I'd like to make an appointment to have my hair cut.

I can smell gas in the kitchen. Would you please send someone to check my stove?

I'd like to book a flight to Vancouver, please.

Would you like to come to dinner next weekend?

In class, two or three people are given slips of paper with telephone cues on them. They call up someone else in the class, who has no idea what is going to be asked of them, and initiate a conversation. The person called must be ready to ask appropriate questions and give appropriate answers to the related cue.

This exercise keeps students on their toes and hopefully lessens their fear of using the telephone.

ALBERTA VOCATIONAL CENTRE, EDMONTON

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.126

CLASS LEVEL: Basic/High Basic **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: food/shopping/count,non-count/making complaints/recipes

Several years ago the teachers at A.V.C. began collecting a variety of empty cans, detergent boxes, frozen vegetable packages, milk cartons, bottles of medicine, aerosol cans, etc. We set up a "store" by arranging the containers in a large bookcase. The items in the store have been extremely valuable when teaching count/non-count, shopping, food vocabulary, types of medicines, etc. Here are some suggested activities:

Activity One: Teaching Food Vocabulary/Money Expressions/Do you like ___?

Use the realia to introduce new vocabulary: names of food, items used for personal hygiene, types of medicine, etc.

Since most of the food containers have pictures, they are ideal for practicing "Do you like _____?".

Students can also work in pairs practicing "How much does it cost? It costs $ _____."

Activity Two: Teaching Count/Non-count

Bring a variety of boxes, cans, cartons, bottles, etc. to class. Teach the students expressions like:

a bottle of _____
a box of _____
a can of _____
a carton of _____
a package of _____
etc.

In subsequent classes, the vocabulary can be reviewed.

These same items can be used to teach the use of "any" and "no, as in the following structures:

Count	Non-count
Are there any (peas) in the (can)?	Is there any (milk) in the (carton)?
No, there aren't any (peas) in the (can).	No, there isn't any (milk) in the (carton).
No, there are no (peas) in the (can).	No, there is no (milk) in the (carton).

(over)

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Activity Three: Buying Groceries/Asking for Directions/Making Complaints

Have pairs of students roleplay buying groceries in an old-fashioned country store, using the following dialogue as a model:

Clerk: Can I help you?
Customer: Yes, I'd like a can of peas, a can of orange juice, and a bar of soap, please.

Students can also practice asking how to find a particular item in a supermarket. Teach the sections found in supermarkets such as: dairy products, fresh produce, meats, etc. Show the students an item and ask them where you would find it. Then have the students roleplay asking directions.

Example:

Customer: Excuse me. Where can I find baking soda?
Clerk: It's in baking goods, aisle 3B.

With a higher level class, introduce expressions used to make complaints such as:

Can I speak to the manager, please?
I bought this _____ yesterday.
It's sour/off/rotten . . .
It tastes bad.
I found a _____ in it.

Have pairs of students roleplay making complaints. Put a variety of containers on the table. The "customer" chooses one and makes an appropriate complaint about it.

Activity Four: Reading Cooking Instructions

Go through the cooking instructions of a variety of items such as: rice, macaroni, frozen peas, etc. Distribute containers to small groups and have them give the cooking instructions to each other:

Student One: How do you cook rice?
Student Two: First, put 3 cups of water in a pan. Bring it to a boil. Then add 1 cup of rice. Cook it for 20 minutes.

Activity Five: Learning Names of Spices/Practicing Senses Vocabulary

Students are often curious about the names of spices in English. Include a selection of spices in your store. Let the students smell and taste them. At the same time you can work on senses vocabulary such as:

It smells strong/spicy/sweet . . .
It tastes sweet/hot/terrible . . .

(over)

Miscellaneous Activities:

Keep adding items to the store. Types of medication are useful to have around when teaching a medical unit. The teacher can pass around empty prescription drug containers, salves, drops, etc. and check the students' comprehension of dosages and warnings.

Include in your store aerosol cans, bleach containers, etc. for use when teaching safety symbols: explosive, flammable, poisonous, and corrosive.

We have recently started using labels from cheese, meat and canned goods. Attach small labels to index cards for easy handling and write prices on canned goods labels. These can be used for many of the above listed activities.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 127

CLASS LEVEL: Basic **CONTRIBUTOR:** Julia Melnyk

SUBJECT: using a newspaper

General Introduction to the Newspaper

Familiarize the students with the newspaper--its name, cost, etc. Then go over it page by page pointing out the sections of interest and teaching the appropriate vocabulary: headlines, articles, classified ads, weather, T.V. listings, cartoons, etc. Write the vocabulary on the blackboard or on a handout.

After this introduction you may want to try one or more of these activities:

Activity One: General Index

Have the students look at the index to the newspaper. Explain how it works and how it can help them find things. Then ask questions such as: "What page is the weather on?" etc., getting the students to look up the answers. This is a good opportunity to teach words such as: real estate, classifieds, entertainment, etc.

Activity Two: Ads

a. classified ads--Look at the index to the classified ads and point out classifications of interest to the students--apartments, jobs, etc. Select a few ads and go over the common abbreviations.

b. display ads--Look at the supermarket and department store ads. Point out important vocabulary--10% off, clearance, discount, etc.

Activity Three: Weather

Have the students familiarize themselves with the weather section. Find the temperatures for different cities. Then make a game out of asking them the temperature in the different cities and seeing who can find it first. Students are always interested to see the foreign temperatures and compare them with the Canadian ones.

Activity Four: Cutting things out of the newspaper

Write on the blackboard a list of things for the students to cut out of the newspaper: one grocery sale item, one ad for a new car, one apartment ad, one clothing ad, etc. Have each person cut one of each out and glue it on a piece of paper. You could also have the students write a sentence or two about each item they have cut out. For example: I want to buy a 1978 Mustang. It costs . . . For a lower level class you may need to provide them with a sample before they understand what is expected of them.

(over)

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Activity Five: Dialogues

Have the students practice a few short dialogues about using the newspaper. See examples below. It helps to use the students' names and to relate it to something they have been doing in class.

Example Dialogues:

Eva: Did you read about that accident in the Journal?

Felix: No, what was it?

Eva: A man died on his first day of work.

Felix: Was it here in Edmonton?

Eva: Yes, on a construction site. He was digging in a trench and the dirt fell on him.

Felix: Oh, the poor guy! I feel sorry for his family.

- - -

Irma: Do you have today's Journal here?

Fatin: Yes, here it is. Why do you want it?

Irma: I'm looking for a job. What section are the jobs in?

Fatin: They're in the classified ads under "employment".

Irma: Oh, here they are. There are lots of ads for janitors.

Fatin: Well, good luck. It's hard to find a good job.

- - -

NOTE: It's a bit cumbersome for every student to have a newspaper, but try to have two students per paper, preferably the same day's edition.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.128

CLASS LEVEL: Basic/High Basic **CONTRIBUTOR:** Marian Rossiter

SUBJECT: wh-questions

Make up a set of cards with short sentences written on them such as: "John plays tennis."

Each student receives a card. One by one they read out their sentence and, as they do, the others ask them questions about it. The person who reads out the sentence has to respond to the questions in normal conversational English.

Example:

Where does he play tennis?	In the park.
When does he play tennis?	On Saturday mornings.
Why does he play tennis?	To stay slim.

This activity keeps the students on their toes because any wh-question may be asked.

Variation

This activity can be used with other tenses and as a verb tense question review.

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ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No.129

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: be supposed to

Divide the students into small groups. Ask them to think of examples of what you are supposed to do and not supposed to do in the following places:

downtown
at the dinner table
in a classroom
on an airplane
in an elevator
in a library
at a zoo

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Have the groups share their ideas. This can lead to a discussion of social "do's" and "don't's" in Canada as compared to in other countries.

The same activity could be done with the following situations:

What are you supposed to do when you are pregnant?
have a cold?
have the flu?
have diabetes?
are involved in an accident?
have a test?

(over)

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What aren't you supposed to do when you are pregnant?
have a cold?
etc.

ESL TEACHING TECHNIQUE No. 130

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic

CONTRIBUTOR: Judith Cornish
Jim Critchley

SUBJECT: using maps

The following activities are based on using maps. If possible, they should be spread out at intervals over two weeks. Many of them can be done in small groups.

Activity One

Discuss the location of the cities or towns the students have come from, for example, near mountains or the seacoast, near national borders, in the north, south, east, west, etc.

Activity Two

Hand out maps of your province and have the students find the city they are in. Discuss the location of other cities around it, using northwest of, west of, south of, etc.

Activity Three

Look at other interesting information on the map, introducing vocabulary like:

border
border crossing
National Park
Provincial Park
highway
Trans-Canada Highway
river
lake
etc.

Get the students to find a few examples of each.

Activity Four

Explain how to use the mileage chart. Have the students find mileages to other cities, practicing the following expressions:

How far is it from _____ to _____?
It's _____ km.

Activity Five

Go through the population symbols; have the students find the population of various places.

(over)

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Activity Six

Explain the use of map coordinates. Use the coordinates to describe the location of cities. Lots of games can be played with coordinates, most involving scanning quickly to find information.

Activity Seven

With more advanced classes, play "Where are we going?". One student chooses a mystery location "X" on the map, not too far away though. That's where the class is going for an imaginary picnic. As he describes as clearly as possible how to get there, all other students follow his route on the map. When he says, "We've arrived!", everyone should theoretically be able to say where the picnic is--in a town, beside a river, etc.

This sounds easy but is in fact a difficult oral and listening exercise. Students must first learn compass directions and highway numbers. It is also very useful if they can use mileage indicators between towns and cities. The teacher will have to give two or three examples before anyone else tries.

Example:

> "Everyone leave Edmonton going south on Highway #2. Turn west at Leduc and drive 43 kilometres west on Highway #29. Then turn south on a small road and continue for about 5 km. Now, where are we?"

Activity Eight

Get pictures of your province to show what different areas look like.

ESL FILM TECHNIQUES SUPPLEMENT

ALBERTA VOCATIONAL CENTRE, EDMONTON, 1979

INTRODUCTION TO FILM SUPPLEMENT

We use films for the same reasons that we use pictures, realia, games, etc. They provide a change of pace, and are enjoyable for both the students and teacher. They generate topics for discussion and composition, and can be used to practice grammatical structures and introduce vocabulary.

Many films are unsuitable for ESL students because the sound tracks are too difficult for people with limited English. This supplement contains films that we have found useful in our adult ESL classes.

Each film technique includes: 1. a brief description of the film, 2. the length, 3. appropriate class level, and 4. suggested activities.

Only National Film Board films have been selected for inclusion in this volume because they are readily available to teachers. Unless otherwise stated, they are 16 mm. color films. They are designated in the indices by an "F" plus a number.

How to Use Films

We strongly recommend that you preview any film before showing it to your students. This enables you to prepare activities based on the film and ensures that it is appropriate for your students. You never know what might be in a film!

It's advisable to do some prep with the students beforehand. Stimulate their interest by giving them background information and by asking them to look for certain things in the film.

We have found short films to be the most versatile because it's possible to show them twice, once without stopping, and again, using one of the following techniques:

1. stop the film at particular frames to ask questions and point out vocabulary,

2. turn off the sound track and provide your own narration,

3. turn off the sound track and have the students narrate the film, and

4. play the sound track only, emphasizing listening comprehension.

ESL FILM TECHNIQUE F NO. 1

TITLE: "Hiroko Ikoko" **LENGTH:** 20 minutes 25 seconds

CLASS LEVEL: High Basic/Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Marg Belyea

SUBJECT: past/past continuous/time clauses/so ___ that/such a ___ that

"Hiroko Ikoko" is a relaxing film about the adventures of two little Japanese girls.

Suggested Activities:

1. The film has no commentary, so it can be used in a basic class to practice simple structures.

2. With a higher level class, have the students retell the story using past and past continuous. Encourage them to use sentence connectors such as: next, after that, then, first, etc. Ask the students if they were ever lost when they were children.

3. Because the story is sequential, it's good for practicing time clauses and clause reduction.

   Examples:

   After they left school, they went to the park.
   After leaving school, they went to the park.

   Before they went to the market, they played with the fish.
   Before going to the market, they played with the fish.

4. Have the students think of examples using the patterns "so ___ that" and "such a ___ that".

   Examples:

   The children were so busy that they forgot the time.
   The parents were so worried that they started looking for them.

   It was such a nice day that the girls didn't want to stay at school.
   It was such a large market that they got lost.

5. Have more advanced students write a composition about the film. Encourage them to use sentence connectors, time clauses, clauses reduction, and "so ____ that" and "such a ___ that" expressions.

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ESL FILM TECHNIQUE F NO. 2

TITLE: "The Railrodder" **LENGTH:** 24 minutes 47 seconds

CLASS LEVEL: Any **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: present continuous/simple past/time clauses/descriptions of people

"The Railrodder" is a silent comedy starring Buster Keaton. It's about a man who crosses Canada on a small railway track speeder. While travelling the rails, Keaton sets up house on his little car, and he provides many laughs while cooking, cleaning, knitting, etc. The film also shows a wide variety of Canadian landscapes.

Suggested Activities:

1. With a basic class, there are opportunities for the teacher to ask the following questions during the film:

   What's he doing?
   What's that?
   What color is it?
   Why is he doing that?
   What's the weather like?
   Where is he now?

   As follow-up the students can retell the story using the past tense.

2. At any level, the students can describe Buster Keaton. Before the film, ask the students to pay particular attention to his appearance and personality traits. Afterwards have them describe him.

   Examples:

   He's going bald.
   He's short and middle-aged.
   He's adventuresome and lucky.
   He's neat.
   He looks serious.
   He's funny.

3. The film is also good for reviewing time clauses.

   Examples:

   While he was reading a newspaper, he saw an ad about Canada.
   After he read the ad, he jumped into the water and swam to Canada.
   While he was drinking his tea, it started to rain.
   When he woke up, he saw a buffalo.
   As soon as he reached the Pacific Ocean, he turned the speeder around.

ESL FILM TECHNIQUE F NO. 3

TITLE: "Elements of Survival - Food" **LENGTH:** 56 minutes 5 seconds

CLASS LEVEL: Advanced **CONTRIBUTOR:** Jeremy Rossiter

SUBJECT: conversation

"Elements of Survival - Food" looks at the frightening disparity between rich and poor nations and examines the problems of food production on a global scale.

Suggested Activity:

Hand the students a sheet with the following statistics (these are all taken from the film):

Only 8% of the earth's surface is arable land.
25% of mankind is undernourished.
The U.S.A. has 25% of the earth's arable land.
Only four countries (Canada, U.S.A., Argentina and Australia) export more food than they import.
It takes 35 gallons of water to produce one slice of bread.
It takes 10,000 gallons of water to produce one pound of meat.
The industrialized nations, with 6% of the world's population, use 45% of the world's energy resources.
In the rich countries of the world the per capita consumption of grain has gone up by 50% in the last 10 years.

The class is divided into groups of three or four students. Each group must imagine that they have been appointed as a committee by the United Nations because of the impending food crisis in the world. After discussion, each group must come up with some recommendations of what could be done:

a. To improve PRODUCTIVITY - e.g. Is it possible to utilize more of the earth's surface for farming? Is land being wasted at present?

b. To improve DISTRIBUTION - e.g. How could the present resources of food be divided up more equally?

Give the students some vocabulary such as:

resources
potential
arable land
irrigation
protein
reclamation
industrialized nations
consumption
surplus
over-population
cereal crops
pollution
market gardening
farming technology

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ESL FILM TECHNIQUE F NO. 4

TITLE: "The Quiet Racket" **LENGTH:** 7 minutes 23 seconds

CLASS LEVEL: Basic/High Basic **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: present continuous/simple past/adjectives

"The Quiet Racket" is a humorous film about a young man who leaves his city apartment to find peace and quiet in the country. Unfortunately, he doesn't succeed, much to the amusement of the viewer. There is no commentary so it's ideal for a basic class.

Suggested Activities:

1. To get maximum use from this film, it's good to show it twice. The first time, provide a simple commentary. Then give the students a list of actions seen in the film. During the second showing ask the students, "What's he doing now?".

2. Students can retell the story using the past tense.

3. This film also provides the opportunity to teach adjectives such as: depressed, unhappy, embarrassed, angry, afraid, excited, etc. Stop the film at selected points and ask, "How does he feel now? Why?".

4. Students could compare country life and city life.

5. A topic for discussion could be the North American phenomenon of "getting away from it all".

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ESL FILM TECHNIQUE F NO. 5

TITLE: "What On Earth" **LENGTH:** 9 minutes 35 seconds

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: conversation/embedded noun clauses

"What On Earth" is a humorous animated film showing modern life on earth as viewed by Martians. The Martians assume that the automobiles they see everywhere are the inhabitants of the earth. The dialogue is somewhat difficult but the point is obvious.

Suggested Activities:

1. Use the film for a discussion of the possibility of life elsewhere in the universe. Ask the students what they would do if they saw a U.F.O.

   The film could also lead to a discussion of how North American life is centered around the automobile.

2. After showing the film a second time, ask the students how the Martians interpreted life on earth. It's a good opportunity to practice embedded noun clauses.

   Examples:

   They thought that automobiles were alive.
   They imagined that billboards were part of the educational system.
   They believed that garages were the cars' homes.
   They assumed that people were pests.

ESL FILM TECHNIQUE

F NO. 6

TITLE: "I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly"

LENGTH: 5 minutes 30 seconds

CLASS LEVEL: Any

CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: singing

"I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly" is an animation of the song by the same name. This old favorite is sung by Burl Ives.

Suggested Activity:

After showing the film, give the students a handout of the words to the song. Go through vocabulary and sing it with the students. Show the film again and have everyone sing along.

With a higher level class you can point out the following grammatical structures:

I know an old lady who swallowed a fly.

I don't know why she swallowed the fly.

She swallowed the fly to catch the spider that wiggled and jiggled and tickled inside her.

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ESL FILM TECHNIQUE F NO. 7

TITLE: "The Walls Came Tumbling Down" **LENGTH:** 25 minutes 30 seconds

CLASS LEVEL: Advanced **CONTRIBUTOR:** Jeremy Rossiter

SUBJECT: conversation/debate

"The Walls Came Tumbling Down" deals with the demolition of old and historical buildings in Montreal. It presents arguments for and against urban development at the expense of tearing down notable historical buildings.

Suggested Activity:

The main issue in the film lends itself well to a class debate. Divide the class into groups of four. Give each group the name of a historical building, preferably a local one. Within each group, two students represent developers and two the conservationists. They must prepare arguments, according to their role, for or against the demolition of the building for redevelopment.

Before showing the film, give the class some useful vocabulary such as: developer, demolition, tear down, heritage, etc.

There is also a leaflet put out by Heritage Canada entitled "What do these buildings have in common?", which outlines what Heritage Canada is doing about preserving the architectural heritage in Canada's cities. If possible, show slides or pictures of local buildings that have been designated for demolition.

ESL FILM TECHNIQUE F NO. 8

TITLE: "The House That Jack Built" **LENGTH:** 8 minutes 2 seconds

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate/Advanced **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl
Marian Rossiter

SUBJECT: past tense/adjective clauses/conversation/composition

"The House That Jack Built" is an animated version of the story "Jack and the Beanstalk". In this film Jack is an average middle-class city dweller who wants to be different from everybody else. He acquires a magic mirror that enables him to achieve success. However, happiness eludes him.

Suggested Activities:

1. This is an excellent film for reviewing the past tense and for introducing some idiomatic expressions. After showing the film, have the students retell the story. Help them by asking guided questions such as:

   Was Jack satisfied with his life at the beginning of the film?
   What was he up to his chin in?
   How did he feel about his job?
   What did he trade his car for?
   What happened when he told his wife about the exchange?
   etc.

   Point out idioms that are used in the film and refer to other events in the film that can be described idiomatically.

   Examples:

   Jack was up to his chin in debts.

   His wife blew up at him when he told her about the trade.

   She bit his head off.

   He was in the dog house.

   Jack was as hungry as a bear after his climb.

   etc.

   After the students are familiar with the story and the idioms, show the film a second time, but turn the sound off. The students take turns narrating the film trying to use idioms where appropriate.

2. The commentary to the film contains dozens of adjective clauses. Here is an excerpt:

   . . . This is the wife that turns on the voice that speaks in the house that Jack built . . .

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This sentence build-up using adjective clauses can be made into a game. The teacher starts it off with a statement like: "This is the book that I bought." Then add an adjective clause to the beginning so that it reads: "This is the woman who told me about the book that I bought." Continue by having the students add to it. You end up with something like this:

> "This is the child who plays with the dog that chases the cat that belongs to the sailor who is married to the woman who knows the woman who told me about the book that I bought."

If the students have problems thinking of something to add, give some cues like "dog", "man", etc.

3. The film can also be used to stimulate a discussion on the importance of wealth and success and the pros and cons of the fast-paced North American way of life. You might also talk about "keeping up with the Joneses".

   Start off the discussion by asking how Jack's life changed during the film. Did success and wealth bring him happiness? Encourage the students to use the comparative.

   Examples:

   > He had a bigger, more expensive car.
   > He paid less attention to his family.
   > He had more problems and worries.
   > He was just as unhappy as before.
   > etc.

   Also introduce some useful expressions like: fast-paced life, living in a rat-race, high-pressured society, be satisfied with, be worth it, etc.

4. Have the students write a composition on a topic like "Does money bring happiness?", incorporating some of the grammatical structures and vocabulary mentioned in the above activities.

ESL FILM TECHNIQUE F NO. 9

TITLE: "The Rise and Fall of the Great Lakes" **LENGTH:** 16 minutes 40 seconds

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate/Advanced **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: conversation/composition

"The Rise and Fall of the Great Lakes" depicts the changes in the Great Lakes region caused by both nature and man. A lone canoeist experiences these changes (including the Ice Age) first hand, and at the end of the film finds himself in a sea of man-made scum. There is singing throughout but the words are somewhat difficult.

Suggested Activity:

The film can be used to generate a discussion on pollution and how man has changed his natural environment. Discuss what the Great Lakes area used to be like and what man has done to it.

Examples:

The water used to be fresh and clean.
The Great Lakes didn't use to be polluted.
There didn't use to be large cities and factories around the Great Lakes.

Man has built dams on the rivers.
Man has destroyed a lot of the beautiful scenery.
Man has built large cities around the Great Lakes.

After discussing the film, have the students write their opinions on pollution and what can be done about it by individuals, industry, and the government. Encourage them to use expression like:

I strongly believe that . . .
In my opinion . . .
Unless the government . . .
If industry . . .
The Government must . . .
Individuals should . . .
Industry can . . .
etc.

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ESL FILM TECHNIQUE F NO. 10

TITLE: "The Ballad of Crowfoot" **LENGTH:** 10 minutes 18 seconds (b/w)

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate/Advanced **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: conversation

"The Ballad of Crowfoot" depicts the effects of the coming of the white man on the native population of western Canada. The film consists of thought-provoking still photography with music sung by Willie Dunne, a Micmac Indian.

Suggested Activity:

This film gives the students an idea of the tremendous changes that have occurred in the Indian way of life over the past 100 years. However, because of the complexity of the subject, it's beneficial to do some prep before hand. Go over vocabulary that is used in the film such as:

Blackfoot/Sioux	buffalo
chief	slaughtered
settlers	treaty
preacher	reserve

Also there are a lot of abstract nouns in the song including:

sadness	love
peace	sorrow
protection	hypocrisy
hardship	honesty
hate	

After showing the film, discuss how the film depicted the coming of the white man. The students may not be able to contribute much but be prepared for a lot of questions. The film often leads to a discussion on discrimination as well.

It's important to balance this rather depressing film with one on modern Indian or Eskimo life. Also, if the students show enough interest, you might cut out articles from the paper on current issues concerning natives such as: land claims, the pipe line, etc. Discuss them in class.

ESL FILM TECHNIQUE

F NO. 11

TITLE: "Kurelek"

LENGTH: 10 minutes 7 seconds

CLASS LEVEL: Advanced

CONTRIBUTOR: Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: conversation

"Kurelek" is a beautiful film made up entirely of the paintings of the Canadian artist William Kurelek. Kurelek himself narrates the film telling the life of his immigrant family. The paintings include scenes from life in the Ukraine and Canada.

Suggested Activity:

Have the students retell the story of William Kurelek's family. The narration is quite difficult so it may be necessary to show it a second time if the students seemed to miss too much. Discuss the hardships the family faced when they came to Canada as immigrants, and what they gave up to come here.

If your students are immigrants themselves, have them compare their experiences as immigrants with those of Kurelek and his family.

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ESL FILM TECHNIQUE F NO. 12

TITLE: "Winterfun Canada" **LENGTH:** 26 minutes 40 seconds

CLASS LEVEL: Any **CONTRIBUTOR:** Faith Fernalld
Joan Neehall
Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: conversation/composition/winter sports/can

"Winterfun Canada" is a film about how Canadians amuse themselves during the long cold winter. Moving from coast to coast, it shows all types of sports and outdoor activities. There is no commentary.

Suggested Activities:

1. With a low level class, you can teach the names of winter sports and outdoor activities including:

   downhill skiing
   cross-country skiing
   snowmobiling
   hockey
   tobogganing
   skating
   figure skating
   ice fishing
   sleigh riding
   hang gliding
   etc.

   Practice expressions like:

Can you ski?	Yes, I can./No, I can't.
Do you know how to ski?	Yes, I do./No, I don't.

   You can also teach the names of some of the equipment needed for these sports: skiis, ski poles, a snowmobile, a hockey stick and puck, a toboggan, skates, etc.

   When previewing the film prepare a vocabulary list for the students to refer to.

2. With a higher level class, you could also have them write guided composition. Show the film once. Pass out a set of questions designed to elicit descriptions of activities shown in the film.

   Examples:

   What takes you up the mountain when you go skiing?
   What city has a good toboggan slide?

   In a circle, discuss these questions with the students, having them answer the questions orally. Then show the film a second time.

(over)

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For homework, have the students write long answers to the questions. Correct the answers, return them to the students and ask them to write a composition about what happened in the film. The answers to the questions form the basis for this composition. In this way the number of errors is reduced considerably.

3. An advanced class can write the commentary for the film. First, prepare a detailed vocabulary list to go along with the film. Go over it before showing the film. Divide them into small groups and assign a section of the film to each group. Tell them to pay particular attention to their section. Show the film and discuss it. Then have each group prepare its part of the commentary. During the second showing each group reads aloud the commentary for its section. Finally, collect the written commentaries from the groups. Have them typed up so the students can have a copy of the complete commentary.

4. Have the students work in small groups to prepare short dialogues based on the following situation:

> You meet a recent immigrant or visitor to Canada. You try to convince him that winter isn't so bad because there are lots of winter sports and activities to choose from.

Circulate, helping the students with vocabulary and idiomatic expressions. Then the students roleplay their dialogues.

ESL FILM TECHNIQUE F NO. 13

TITLE: "Balablock" **LENGTH:** 7 minutes 27 seconds

CLASS LEVEL: Any **CONTRIBUTOR:** Bev Ruhl
Bruce Caldwell
Faith Fernalld

SUBJECT: conversation/composition/idioms

"Balablock" is an animated film about discrimination. It parodies man's tendency to resort to violence rather than reason. Human beings are represented by cubes and balls. Their conflict is resolved only when their fighting reduces them to the same shape. The cycle begins all over again when a new shape appears on the scene.

Suggested Activities:

1. The film is excellent for a discussion of discrimination, intolerance, nonconformity, violence and their effects. You could mention Canada's Human Rights Legislation and what to do if discriminated against.

2. With a high level class, introduce some useful idiomatic expressions that relate to events in the film. The following list refers to the fighting scenes in the film:

   pick on someone
   gang up on someone
   pick a fight
   call someone names
   get along with
   look down on someone
   kick around
   take turns
   serve one right
   get even with
   tell two things apart

   The following idioms refer to the end of the film, when a triangle appears on the scene:

   stand out (like a sore thumb)
   feel out of place
   be an odd ball

   After going through the idioms, show the film again, and have the students try using the idiomatic expressions. For follow-up, the students could write sentences using the idioms.

3. Have the students write a composition on discrimination.

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ESL FILM TECHNIQUE F NO. 14

TITLE: "Blowhard" **LENGTH:** 5 - 10 minutes (approx.)

CLASS LEVEL: Intermediate/Advanced **CONTRIBUTOR:** Ada Nanning
Bev Ruhl

SUBJECT: conversation/composition/past of modals/adverbials of means

"Blowhard" is a humorous animated film about a small town which discovers how to use dragons as a source of energy for heating and transportation. Eventually this unusual energy source becomes exhausted and the citizens of the town have to look for other forms of energy.

Suggested Activities:

1. Discuss what happened in the film. Have the students give examples of what the citizens should have done, shouldn't have done, and could have done.

   Examples:

   They shouldn't have used up all the dragon energy.
   They could have looked after the dragons better.
   They should have used the sun and wind for energy.

2. The film is an excellent way to stimulate discussion of energy conservation, alternative energy sources, and ecology. Have the students think of ways individuals, industry, and government can conserve energy.

   Examples:

   Individuals can conserve energy by:

   walking instead of driving all the time.
   taking public transportation.
   turning off lights.
   arranging car pools.
   insulating their homes.
   using fewer electrical gadgets.
   etc.

3. The students can also write a composition on what should be done to conserve energy.

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